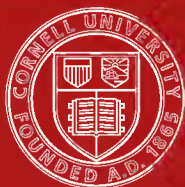


# BIBLE TALKS

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— FOR —  
Heart and Mind





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# BIBLE TALKS

— FOR —

## HEART AND MIND



10,000 Edition

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."—1 Peter 4: 1

"I believed, and therefore have I spoken."—2 Corinthians 4: 13.



1909.

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For  
The Glory of God  
To  
Honour His Son  
To  
Comfort His People

*1 Cor. 10 : 31 ; John 5 : 23*

*John 17 : 17 ; Phil. 2 : 9-11*

*Rev. 5 : 13 ; 15 : 3, 4*

*Rom. 15 : 4*

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## PREFACE

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**P**RIVILEGE brings Responsibility. The truth of this cannot be questioned for a moment; nor will it be doubted that the extent of the privilege is the measure of the responsibility, and that failure to measure up to the responsibility involves forfeiture of present privilege, as well as that bound up in the possibilities of the future. Nothing comes to anyone entirely free of all cost; if one take, he must also give.

These facts apply not only to the ordinary affairs of all our lives, but as well to the experiences of the Christian life, and to the relations of God's people to His revealed Truth. Has one been enlightened? He must shine, or that light may become darkness.

That some light might shine to the glory of God from the pages of this work is the reason for its publication, and with this hope and prayer it is sent forth. Should it be so far favoured as to be the means of bringing light, joy and peace to some longing hearts, its effort thus to serve the truth concerning the Cross of Christ and the New Covenant, made effective by His shed blood, will not have been in vain. And each one thus blessed will in turn realise the privilege of extending the good news, and of letting the light shine still further.

## PREFACE.

The Scripture citations are numerous, and it is believed fully sustain the interpretations given; but it has been found impossible to refer to all the Scriptures which might be corroborative. It is hoped that the reader will, with a concordance or other aid, search the Word for such additional evidence as may be therein contained. Our experience is that the systematic searching of the Scriptures reveals much more of the details of God's gracious purposes than the casual reader imagines. Very often the difficulty is that the passages on a given subject are so numerous, that constant reference to them is necessary, in order to keep them all in memory,

The most of these Bible Talks have been given by one of the authors in many of the large cities of Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Some of the hearers have been so good as to say that they were edified. May the truth in print have the same result in greater measure, if God so will!

It is a pleasure as well as a duty to acknowledge the spiritual, literary, and financial assistance afforded by many friends in many lands. The Lord reward them!

Yours in Jesus, our Redeemer, Mediator and Intercessor,

E. C. and R. B. HENNINGS.

Melbourne, June 1, 1909.

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# Bible Talks

## I.

### The Shining Light and the Open Mind

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—Prov. 4: 18.

**T**HIS description of the path of the just is equally true, whether it be considered in the individual or in the collective sense. The following verse (Prov. 4: 19) presents a contrast:—"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble." To all outward appearances they may prosper, but their minds are darkened, they are strangers to fine feelings and unselfish thoughts and acts, and wherever they go they carry trouble and desolation. But the just have in themselves a reservoir of light: their minds are illuminated with wisdom, joy and love, which they have received from the Giver of all good, and as they go through life they shed light and happiness around. As the sun each hour increases in brilliancy and power, so each year of life means to them increase in all the virtues, and added power to shed beneficent

influences upon others. Who would not follow in the path of the just, to receive the benefit of their shining; and, when day declines, and life is o'er, be ready to shine out as another sun to enlighten and bless another generation?

There have been many just persons whose lives shone out in marked contrast to the darkness around them. They served their day and generation unselfishly, inculcating ideas of honour and equity, and alleviating as far as possible the sufferings of humanity. The world was better for their having lived in it; and succeeding generations gain courage from their example, and seek still higher ideals and still wider means of doing good.

But there is a larger sense in which the path of the just is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. In the beginning, through the introduction of sin, a dark night settled down upon our race. A curse had been pronounced, and death laid a dark pall over all mankind. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." So have countless millions of our race in weariness laid themselves down, "without God, and having no hope in the world." At the beginning, indeed, a ray of hope was given, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head"; but that ray was soon lost to the sight of the majority. Only a few essayed to walk the difficult path marked out by it, and to become *just*, not perhaps so much by reason of extraordinary good works, as by means of their *faith*. (Rom. 4: 1-8.) Sometime, somewhere, by some unknown benefactor, the evil wrought by sin was to be undone. It was a slender

promise, but with what joy did our first parents grasp it, and trust that their firstborn should be the promised "seed"! Alas! instead, a few years proved that he himself was but the slave of Sin, and walking in darkness. Still the promise stood, and their faith clung to it. They walked in the path of faith, they rejoiced in the meagre light, and they hoped that in God's own time more light should be given and they should understand and the promise be fulfilled.

Not in their day, however, but in succeeding generations did the light shine "*more and more.*" It was to be a long trial of faith and patience, and added light came slowly. Clouds obscured the rising sun, and frequent storms made the path more difficult, but still the faithful ones of old plodded on. The flood swept away its legions, but a faithful few trod unmoved the unknown way before them. Sodom and Gomorrah were reduced to ashes; kingdoms rose and fell; nations multiplied, and filled the earth; but the path of the just was the solitary way of faith, and its illumination was in the hands of God, not men.

In Abraham's day the light shone "more" on the path of the just. "In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12: 3; 22: 16-18.) So the bruising of the serpent meant the blessing of all whom he had bruised! No wonder our Lord said, "Father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8: 56.) More light upon the pathway was vouchsafed during the Jewish age, when an entire nation was separated from the darkness of the heathen nations around, and pledged by formal covenant to walk in a specified

path under the special guidance and blessing of Jehovah. And to that nation finally came Jesus, the long promised "Messiah," the "true light" which is in due time "to lighten every man coming into the world."—John 1: 9.

For eighteen hundred years the light has shone in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord (2 Cor. 4: 4-6), to give the knowledge of the glory of God, and many have rejoiced in the simple truths of redemption and salvation. But how many questions still require answers: questions often unspoken, but for which heart and mind desire a satisfactory solution. And some may ask, Is the light shining more and more on these matters? There has been much suffering in the world; conditions have been very unequal, so that the righteous have often been ground down, while the wicked have flourished. Are the sinful and unhappy conditions we see and experience to continue for ever? Our thoughts often go back to those with whom we loved to walk and talk, and who have passed away. Has God been pleased to reveal anything concerning their present condition and future prospects? Above all, is there any assurance of good concerning those who have died without a knowledge of Christ, or who, having heard, it may be, His name, never seemed attracted to Him? And we may reply confidently, Yes; the light shines more and more. There is no need to be in doubt or ignorance on these subjects. The Scriptures are opening up, and revealing God's purposes in Christ in ever increasing beauty and harmony, and now, more than ever before, the "just" may walk in that "shining light," more and more "unto the perfect day."



But of what avail is the "shining light" without the open mind? What joy comes to the blind from the splendours of the day? What satisfaction is the promise to those who do not believe? A little light, a faint ray of hope; oh, how precious it is to the one awake, and watching and longing for it!

The possession of an open mind has long been recognised as a pre-requisite to learning of any kind. The child going to school is not only instructed beforehand to pay close attention to what is said, but to listen in an attitude of receptivity. What he hears must become a part of himself. The teachers are described as marvels of wisdom, who will impart equal wisdom to apt pupils. It is partly on account of this attitude of mind that children learn quickly and well. In later years attention is divided among many interests, the faith and the zeal are lacking, and "grown ups" bewail their inability to learn new ways or adopt better methods than those in vogue in their youth. The main difficulty, which they often fail to recognise, is that after having imbibed a certain amount of knowledge they close their minds, and want no more. "What was good enough for father and mother," they say, "is good enough for me"; and, as they often add, "for my children, too," progress is blocked, educationists wear themselves out pleading for advanced ideas, and narrowness and superstition perpetuate themselves indefinitely. What is necessary, then, to the acquisition of knowledge, is a *will to learn*; a constant desire for more information, more ability, and more opportunity.

But an open mind, to be of value to its owner, must be a discriminating one, and have good power of choice. It is not to be a sewer to receive the refuse thrown out by other minds. The small child at school must at first hold his critical faculty in abeyance, and receive without question whatever is poured into him, the standing and scholarship of the teacher being guarantee that only the best information available will be given; but this passive acceptance of all offered cannot continue forever. In spite of himself as he grows older he finds himself questioning one theory and statement after another. He wishes to consult the authorities quoted by his teachers; to make certain experiments with his own hand in his own way; to apply for himself the principles he has been taught; in short, he wishes to prove to himself *the truth* of every item in his scheme of things, and the real meaning of every word in his vocabulary. It is because of this innate desire to *know*, and to *know the truth*, that the results of the investigations of one generation are dissolved by a succeeding one, or made merely stepping stones to more accurate knowledge. In this way it often happens that a truth is discarded by careless or self-opiniated investigators, who go to the other extreme and imagine that everything their forbears discovered or delighted in is now out of date and useless. Their discriminative processes are one-sided and prejudiced, or their information is not as exact as they imagine, and they consequently reason from false premises. Scientists are continually revising their cosmogony; mechanical experts develop and discard invention after invention; and still new fields of investigation and

activity stretch out before them. But those minds whose openness and discrimination are backed up by sound judgment and love of truth are careful to retain from the old whatever has proved valuable and endured the test of time and experience. Being possessed of certain essential and well established facts, they look out on the world with eyes and ears alert, they examine and test every suggestion and claim coming within range, and they build up item by item a store of knowledge which is a constant delight to themselves and a never failing fund of information and pleasure to their friends.

One difficulty met by the open mind is that of securing adequate data upon which to form a decided and correct opinion. Carlyle and Macaulay have expressed the difficulty in connection with historical research. An historian who writes absolutely without bias, setting forth the whole truth on a subject or an event, deserves unbounded admiration. Where love of truth overrides personal or national pride and prejudice, and secures the honest and straightforward presentation of facts in their correct relation to each other and with due credit given even to an adversary, too much praise cannot be bestowed.

In no field of investigation are an open mind, a candid search for facts and accurate data, and judicious discrimination more necessary than in the study of God's Word and of the history of religion. This is so not only because these qualities demonstrate the possession of a well regulated mentality, and bring the possessor much satisfaction, but because knowledge of certain divine truths is essential to salvation. (Acts

4: 12; John 3: 36.) In addition, the attitude taken by either nations or individuals in relation to light, in either accepting or rejecting it, automatically records the degree of punishment to be meted out. (Luke 11: 48-52; 13: 34, 35; 12: 46-48.) To offend against a scientific truth may result in physical injury, as when one grasps a "live wire"; but to offend against a spiritual truth will result in injury to the character, and the piling up of retribution, less swift than that of the wire but none the less sure.

According to set purpose, God shed light upon the pathway of the just. As his glorious plan developed he took certain individuals and subsequently a nation into his confidence, and revealed features appropriate for them to know. (Gen. 18: 17; Psa. 25: 14; Amos. 3: 7; John 15: 15.) In view of their known characteristics He arbitrarily chose Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to receive His promises and to fulfil certain purposes, but during the Jewish age He sent messages to the people through the prophets, and allowed these messages to have a selective effect, manifesting the just and revealing the stiff-necked and hard-hearted. The light shone, but the Word did not profit them, "not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Heb. 3: 19; 4: 5.) Only a remnant appreciated the light, and walked in the path which it illuminated.

Was it not the same in our Lord's day? The prophet had said (as quoted by St. Matthew concerning Galilee), "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." (Matt. 4: 14-16.) Of Him had it also been written, as quoted

by the Apostles, "I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Acts 13: 47.) The light increases for the blessing of the chosen people of Israel (to whom the light had previously been confined), and it shines further—even to all nations, peoples and tongues—marking out the pathway of the just, that they may "walk in the light even as He is in the light," and making the darkness by contrast more dense than ever. Col. 1: 13; John 2: 8-11; 1: 6, 7.

The responsibility of the Jews for their attitude toward the light then shining was repeatedly called to their attention by the Lord. "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6: 22, 23.) "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11: 25.) "By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." (Matt. 13: 14-16.) "Ye blind guides, which strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel!" John "was a burning and a shining light: and ye were will-

ing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than that of John; . . . and ye will not come unto Me, that ye may have life. . . . "How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John 5: 35-47.) "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." (John 9: 39-41.) "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not walk in darkness." "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." (John 12: 35-46.) The whole world is witness to the fact, not only that the scribes and Pharisees by reason of their closed minds and blind eyes failed to appreciate the goodness and the mission of Jesus, and developed hard and hateful dispositions, but that both they and their blind followers fell into the ditch; that time of trouble and judgment which came upon the nation, resulting in the scattering of the people and the desolation of their land. Of this very result they had been forewarned by John the Baptist—"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3: 12.) The apostles also subsequently warned the Jews of the consequences of resisting the light; saying, "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13: 40, 41.) "Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but

obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." (Rom. 2: 8, 9.) Be it noted, tribulation, anguish and wrath are not set forth as the certain doom of the majority of men, to be inflicted in another world; but they are declared to be the sure punishment of every one who, having been brought into contact with the light, steadfastly and persistently rejects it, and continues in unrighteousness. Those on whom the light of divine truth has never shone are in an altogether different position. The loss of their national existence and the intense sufferings they have undergone during their exile have been indeed a severe punishment on the Jewish nation for their rejection of the Messiah. Of this the Apostle Paul says—"The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."—1 Thes. 2: 16.

The history of the Gentile nations has been largely determined by their attitude toward the gospel light. Alas, that we must say it, the record of the past eighteen hundred years, its repetition of wars, pestilence and crime, shows how slight has been the influence of Christianity on the masses of the peoples. Many indeed have had their minds open to as much of the gospel as they could profitably use. "Do to others as ye would that they should do to you" has become a maxim easily quoted for the benefit of others, but it is put in practice by only a small percentage of professors. One has only to read partisan histories or highly spiced editorials on national achievements past and present, or to listen to pleas of agitators for improved social conditions, to comprehend that the good

to be done to others is more often dictated by self-interest than by philanthropy or the genuine spirit of self sacrifice practised by Jesus. It is because the gospel of Christ has been only *nominally* accepted that we have to-day a repetition of the conditions which existed at the end of the Jewish age—"Christian nations," great institutions of learning, wonderful organisations for religious and social propaganda, but permeating all the leaven of selfishness and unbelief. The outside of the platter is clean, but inside it is full of all manner of corruption.

As already stated, an open mind implies a *will to learn*. This means not a passive willingness to receive what of truth is thrust upon one, but an active interest in searching for it; and a readiness to make sacrifices to obtain it, as expressed by the Wise Man—"If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, *then* shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." (Prov. 2: 3-5.) Every avenue of learning, every fact established by scientific research, every examination of the wonders of the heavens above and the earth beneath, every inquiry into the operations of moral law and spiritual force, may-lead to the knowledge of God; for He is revealed by the things that He has made. (Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 24-26; Rom. 1: 20.) He who delights in the magnitude of the celestial systems may marvel at the wonderful might and power of God; he who examines with microscope the infinite variety and beauty of the flower and the snowflake may extol His refinement and delicacy; he who studies the



history of our race, noting the degradation and decay which follow the transgression of moral law, may see His long suffering, as well as His unfailing retributive justice; but he who ventures into the realm of the spiritual realises that all other revelations of God are but partial, and bring one only to the threshold of really knowing Him.

What is then our desire? What is the limit to our craving for the knowledge of God? Are we satisfied to gaze approvingly at His marvellous works in nature, as we might look with wonder and appreciation at the work of some clever engineer; or do we wish to know Him *personally*? Do we wish to know the motives controlling His acts, the principles of His government, His object in permitting sin to mar the visible creation, and the purposes which He as a Mighty Intelligence is working out? Do we want to know whether *love, kindness and mercy* are elements of His character, and how they operate in relation to His more awe-inspiring qualities? If so, we must seek an introduction. We cannot say we know an engineer because we have seen a bridge of his construction: that is knowing only one of his abilities, from which we may deduce only a few elements of his character. We cannot say we are acquainted with God because we admire His work in nature: that is only the beginning. And we may well ask ourselves, Are we willing to give as much time and thought and study to knowing God personally as scientists give to learning a little about His works, and engineers spend in the application of His principles of weight and force? Are we satisfied to hear what others say about Him, or

do we want a little first-hand information? Do we desire to learn what was said about Him three thousand, or one thousand, or five hundred years ago by those who did not know Him, or do we prefer to know what has been said by the holy prophets and apostles whom He directly informed and authorised to act as His mouthpieces? (2 Pet. 1: 21; Rev. 21: 14.) In other words, do we wish to use our "open minds" intelligently and with discrimination?

But it is one thing to desire information, and another thing to get it; for of what avail is the open mind without the shining light? Is He who possesses the information willing to impart it? No person of dignity cares to gratify mere idle curiosity, or to give knowledge to one who will misuse it. No stranger can walk into the Court of St. James and demand audience; he cannot examine the archives at the State Paper Office without showing his credentials and explaining the object of his search; he cannot enter a public library to consult a volume without following a prescribed mode of procedure. Nor does he expect the custodian of the documents or the librarian to scatter manuscripts and books promiscuously to the crowd. The information is there for whoever will come for it in the right way.

It should not surprise us, then, that the Almighty maintains an attitude of dignity, and that while desirous of revealing to man His purposes, He has adopted a mode of procedure to which those desiring knowledge must conform; furthermore, that He will impart at a given time just as much as He pleases, and this to the nations or individuals He pleases. We must recognise

at the outset that He is obliging us by His attentions, not that we are specially benefitting Him by accepting them. The mind must be open, not only in readiness to receive truth, and in activity to search for it, but in willingness to recognise the propriety of certain conditions and methods by conforming to which the desired knowledge is to be obtained.

What are the conditions on which God is ready to instruct the inquirer, to let the light shine unto Him? And what is the prescribed mode of procedure for approaching Him?

In the first place, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;" (Heb. 11: 6.) If one do not believe in the existence of a personal God, he is not likely even to desire to approach Him; but, granted that God exists, were no benefit expected, the average person would not trouble Him. Men do not make long journeys to return empty handed. But we, who believe that God is the first Great Cause, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," and that He has a rich reward for those who seek Him, have at once an *incentive* which gives keenness of search and indifference to pain and hardship in attaining our end.

We also find, by consulting those who speak for Him, that "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;" also that "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace (or favour) to the humble." (Psa. 97: 11; 1 Pet. 5: 6; James 4: 6, 7.) If the mind be open enough to take in these conditions, a good start has been made in learning the character of God, for properly to demand these

characteristics in others, he must himself possess them. When the Jews were puzzled as to whether Jesus were in reality the Messiah, some saying, "He is a good man," and others, "He deceiveth the people," they were given an easy mode of determining the matter. "Jesus answered them, and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man *will to do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.'" The Jew could not consistently expect enlightenment, unless willing first to acknowledge God, and to do His will, for he had been for centuries under God's providence and care, and was in covenant relation with Him, having at Mount Sinai promised that very thing—"All these things (required by God) will we do." The intimation was, therefore, that to receive and appreciate a message from His messenger, they must be on proper terms with God Himself.

These conditions indicate general principles of God's dealing, applicable to all time; but the mode of procedure in approaching God has differed in different ages, according to God's own arrangement. In the Patriarchal Age men approached God through the offering of sacrifices\*, every man at the door of his tent. (Gen. 12: 8; 13: 4; 26:25.) In the Jewish age God's presence was manifested by the Shekinah Glory in the Most Holy, into which only the High Priest entered. The nation of Israel approached

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\*These sacrifices were typical of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which alone can really take away sin, and make the comers thereto perfect.—Heb. 10: 1-14.

God only through the ministration of the priests, and by prayer offered facing Jerusalem and the temple, thus acknowledging the Presence and the sacrifices\* there offered. (Deut. 12: 5-14; 1 Kings 8: 28-30; 2 Chron. 7: 12; Dan. 6: 10.) Our Lord referred to this in His conversation with the woman at the well; intimating that the Samaritans, ostensibly worshipping the same God as the Jews, did not know what they were worshipping, and that acceptable prayer could be offered only through Jerusalem, the place where God had set His name.

In the same conversation the Lord explained that shortly another way of approach to God would be opened up, different to that of the "fathers" in the "mountain," and of the Jews at Jerusalem. (John 4: 20-24.) Hence the sincere inquirer must not attempt to follow the methods in vogue before our Lord's day, though it is well for him to understand them, and the reasons for the change; but he must inform himself concerning present methods. *Our Lord came for the express purpose of opening a new way to God*, by the sacrifice of Himself, and the inauguration of a *New Covenant* or arrangement. No one can have access to God except through Jesus Christ; no one can know God, except Jesus Christ reveal Him.—John 3: 14-17; 6: 27-29, 37, 45, 51; 8: 28; 12: 32, 33; 10: 9; 14: 6; Matt. 11: 15-27.

Our Lord's words (Matt. 11: 25-27; see also 1 Pet. 1: 10-12; Eph. 3: 2-6) indicate that prior to His advent the knowledge which men had of God was limited,

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\*See note, page 24.

even among those who served Him in accordance with the previously prescribed methods. They knew Him as God Almighty, the great and terrible God, and as Jehovah, the ever living, covenant-keeping God; but they did not know Him as the *loving* God; they did not know Him as their Father, for it is only through Christ that any have a right to call Him by that dear name. (Exod. 6: 2-8; John, 3: 16; 1 John 4: 9; Rom. 8: 15; Gal. 4: 6.) Open-minded, humble, righteous men, who came to God in the appointed way, received in each age the degree of revelation of God which He designed to give, and they had *faith* that "in due time" further revelations would be forthcoming, together with the fulfilment of the promises. So we read—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8: 56. See also Acts 7: 2-5; Heb. 11: 13-16, 39.) "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" the gospel or good news was preached to him in simple terms; but not for two thousand years did God reveal to the open-minded students of His Word the particulars concerning the accomplishment of the promised blessing.—Rom. 4: 22-25; 3: 24, 25; Gal. 3: 8, 13, 14.

From the consideration of these things we find not only that God has a due time for accomplishing His purposes, but also a due time for revealing them to His people. Hence, while desirous to learn all that is due in our own day, we must recognise that if it does not please God to reveal certain matters to us, we must go on in faith with what has been granted, confident that all His purposes will be fulfilled, and all mysteries finally made known. Whatever of obscurity may yet

rest upon the divine plan will not endure forever, for it is still true that the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. On one point, however, we must be on guard; that is, not too readily to assume that it is not His will to reveal certain things just because *we* do not understand them; nor is it necessary to believe that every fresh feature of His plan must be revealed directly to us, as by inspiration or vision. John the Baptist was specially ordained to point out the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God, and the Apostles were specially chosen as witnesses of His death and resurrection, that their testimony might be believed by those who should hear it. (John 17: 20; 2 Thes. 1: 10.) Their writings, inscribed under the power of the Holy Spirit, together with the Old Testament Scriptures, are profitable, and thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3: 14-17.) So we read, "*Thy Word* is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119: 105.) God's order now is not to inspire fresh writers, but to open up and make plain what is already written. To this end he uses instruments; and hence it is necessary to have an open mind not toward God only, but toward any of His children who may be used by Him to call our attention to a truth contained in His Word. Unfortunately, that Word has in many respects been made void by the traditions of men, so that much of its real meaning has been lost; the "dark ages" are responsible for many perversions of the Word; but, thanks be to God, He has never left Himself without a witness, and from the Reformation onward one truth after another has been

recovered, until now it is possible for His people to delight in His glorious plan as never before. In succeeding pages of this volume an attempt is made to set forth in a systematic manner some prominent features of the divine plan, in an harmonious interpretation of the Scriptures, which we trust will commend itself to all students.

The Apostle Peter says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." He also says, "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (1 Pet. 4: 11; 2 Pet. 1: 20, 21.) The same may be said of the apostolic writings. This being so, it is useless for anyone to attempt a fanciful interpretation, or to handle the Word deceitfully, or to wrest it out of its proper connection. From this there can be only one result: pain and disappointment to all concerned, if not more serious consequences. (Tit. 3: 9; Tit. 1: 10, 11; 2 Pet. 3: 16.) We may rest confident that those who seek to draw from the Scriptures only the truths which the Holy Spirit concealed there, and who give to language its true meaning, will be in line to understand when the time comes for the same Holy Spirit to interpret it through willing instruments. The apostles frequently called attention to the necessity of holding fast "the form of sound words;" of "Consenting to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ;" "Holding fast the faithful word;" thus emphasising not only the value of the doctrines, but of the very words themselves; since it is only by the employment of words of recognised mean-



ing that definite and understandable statements can be made. In the Scriptures, as in other erudite writings, the surface meaning, glibly read off, may not always be the true one. It is advisable to consider the time and circumstances under which the words were spoken or written, to whom addressed, with what object, etc., and to study carefully the context. Thus an harmonious interpretation for the whole passage may be secured. Corresponding passages in other portions of the Bible need also to be compared, that all the light possible may be turned on the subject.

Are there any definite promises of enlightenment, to stimulate the timid Christian, who feels that God is too great or too far away to care for one so insignificant? Yes—"If *any of you* lack wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and *it shall be given him*. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened . . . How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" "The spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth." "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" The experience of Daniel is an encouragement to all earnest, prayerful truth-seekers—"O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came

forth, and I am come to show thee.—Jas. 1: 5, 6; Matt. 7: 7-12; John 16: 13; Rom. 8: 32; Dan. 9: 3, 22, 23.

Truth is the common heritage of all God's people, and is to be regarded as a sacred trust. While rejoicing in the "glad tidings," the "blessed hope," "the peace that passeth understanding," and in the countless other blessings which accompany salvation, they have imbibed so much of the spirit of their Master, that they delight to share all these good things with as many others as possible. As He was a light shining in darkness, so they wish to be, as He commanded, reflectors of that light: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.) The light will shine in proportion to the consistency of their daily lives, and according to the measure of their zeal in His service. Every ray of light which comes to them, whether doctrinal or practical, gives added brilliancy to their shining. At no period in the history of the age has the true light been more needed than just now, when thousands are turning from the simplicity of the gospel to the theories and imaginations of men. Oh, may it be our blessed privilege to be as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid, but offers to all a guiding light, a hearty welcome, a "feast of fat things," and rest at the Master's feet. And may we, with renewed courage and zeal, lift high, that all may see,

**The Glorious Standard of the Cross!**

**Christ, and Him crucified—**

**The Power of God, and the Wisdom of God!**

## II.

### The Three Worlds

**I**T has already been pointed out that in our endeavour to understand the Divine Plan, revealed in the Divine Word, we need to follow with open mind the shining light, praying always that God might be pleased to guide us by His Spirit into truth as it may become due. Perhaps in nothing is this necessity more manifest than in the subject now to be considered, for it is in this connection that the Apostle tells us of some who have not thus followed the light, who consequently are measurably in darkness, and who, by reason of their remissness, have gone so far into a wrong way as to become "scoffers, walking after their own desires, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter 3: 3, 4.) How careful we should be to submit our minds fully to the moulding influence of truth, so that we might be conformed to the Divine Will!

In 2 Peter 3: 5-14, we find the three "worlds" connectedly described: (1) the world that then was, composed of "heavens" and "earth"; (2) the "heavens"

and "earth" which are now; (3) new "heavens" and new "earth," to be expected and looked for, according to Divine promise.

Of the "world that then was," we read that it, "being overflowed with water, perished." It is essential to the correct understanding of the remainder of this chapter, and of a great deal that is set forth elsewhere in the Divine Word, that we have full assurance as to that which perished. The allusion is to the flood in Noah's day. Did that flood destroy the terrestrial earth, or the astronomical heavens? Did it destroy the heaven where God's throne is set? Such questions almost supply their own answers, and it immediately becomes plain that "heavens" and "earth" are here used symbolically. This is by no means unusual in Scripture. A moment's thought will bring to mind much symbolic language used in the Bible. Imagery was conspicuous in our Lord's ministry of the truth; so much so that it is written, "Without a parable spake He not unto them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables.'"—Matt. 13: 34, 35.

By "world that was," we are evidently to understand the *order of things* that existed, before the flood, in connection with the affairs of mankind on the terrestrial earth. The order of things is to be considered as having consisted of two parts, symbolically represented as "heavens" and "earth." The "earth" portion of that *order of things* was the social order of that time; the "heavens" were those higher beings and influences which exercised sway over the "earth" portion, and dominated it.

The English word "world," as used in the New Testament, is the translation of four different Greek words: "*aion*," meaning age, ages, 38 times, adjective form, 3 times; "*oikoumene*," the habitable, 14 times; "*ge*," earth or land, once; "*kosmos*," order, regularity, 185 times. It is the last word, *kosmos*, that is used by Peter.

It is not easy to determine how the domestic, commercial and governmental affairs of the race were regulated in antediluvian days. No information concerning the customs of that period has come down to us, so that we could offer nothing better than a groundless surmise on the subject. Did they dwell in houses or tents; did they carry on interchange of products under the system that we know, or one similar; did they entertain themselves with music and the arts, as we do? All these questions are at present incapable of satisfactory answers, so we must leave them, confessing that we know practically nothing of the "earth" portion of the "world that was," or social conditions and arrangements prior to the flood.

We can gather, from Scripture, something about the "heavens," or spiritual ruling powers of those times. From Genesis 6, it appears that angels were permitted to exercise predominating influence over humanity. What the object was is not definitely stated, but it may have been in the nature of an experiment. Not, however, for the satisfaction of the Omniscient One (Isa. 46: 9, 10), but rather as a demonstration to both angels and men (Isa. 48: 5) of the impossibility of altering, by the introduction of reforms, the death penalty that had come upon the race through the original

transgression (Gen. 2: 17; 3: 17-19, 22, 23; Rom. 5: 12). The result of this contact of angels and humanity was most unsatisfactory. The angels were degraded; they "kept not their first estate," and so plunged our race deeper into the mire of sin. The end of it all was that God concluded that order of things by bringing upon it the flood. The fallen angels were bound in chains of darkness (2 Peter 2: 4), and the social order of that time was so completely swept away that not even a tradition of it remains.

It is "the proper thing" in our day to be sceptical about the great flood. Many of those who stand in the pulpits to-day, as well as the professors who prepare them to stand there, have relegated the narrative of the flood to the region of the nursery tales—a "cunningly devised fable," not a "faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation." And yet, these sceptics profess great respect, even reverence, for the name of Jesus, and esteem Him as the greatest exponent of practical morals the world has known. Some will condescend to admit that in some sense, not clear to them, He was the Son of God. But their position is an impossible one; and a moment's reflection will show that it is neither reasonable nor in harmony with good morals. Our blessed Lord, Redeemer and Teacher referred to the flood of Noah's day as an historical fact, and based on it some of His teaching. (Matt. 24: 37-39.) This being so, present-day deniers of the flood must consistently cease respecting Jesus, for they are bound to admit that He was either ignorant or a deceiver. If they say Jesus was ignorant, let them forthwith discard

Him as a reliable teacher; if they say he was a deceiver, let them immediately cease referring to the Sermon on the Mount as an exposition of practical morals, and let them, in their capacity as leaders of the people, strictly warn their flocks against Jesus, and against accepting either Old or New Testament as the Word of God. Some have adopted this position, others are approaching it; and it may be questioned whether the present-day flood of scepticism, prevailing as it does above all the heights of intellectuality and reason, is not more devastating than was the flood of waters.

### **The Heavens and Earth Which are Now**

Following the destruction of the antediluvian order of things, came the institution of another arrangement to take its place. This is also composed of "heavens" and "earth," these terms being still used symbolically with the same general meanings as before. The social arrangements, which began after the flood with those who came out of the ark, have continued generally the same to the present. Certainly there have been revolutions, in Bible symbol called "earthquakes," and these have altered the forms and customs in some parts; but the general substance and contour of our social arrangements have been much the same for over four thousand years. The central principle of the present social order or "earth" is that those who govern do so while they can; or, to express it otherwise, "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Examine all the forms that government has taken among men in the past forty centuries,

and all the forms under which it is known by the present generation: whether you contemplate the Patriarch and his tribe, the Baron and his feudal retainers, the Absolute Monarch and his subjects, the Constitution (Monarchical or Democratic) and its citizens, the principle is the same. Let your vision range into futurity, contemplating the forms, eagerly desired by some, of Socialism and Anarchy, and the principle above cited is still at the centre. But the motive power of all the social and governmental arrangements of the past and present, and the motive power that urges forward desire and effort toward Socialism and Anarchy, is *selfishness*. Governing classes, ecclesiastical, political, commercial and social, have grasped and retained power at the inspiration of self-interest, individuals here and there being occasional noble exceptions to the general rule; the governed have "consented" to the dominance of the others only for as long as they felt obliged to do so, their pent-up discontent now and again breaking forth as a "volcano" or an "earthquake."

The "elements" of the present "earth" are well symbolised in a general way by the natural divisions of the physical earth. The dry land stands for the conservative, order-loving portion of humanity, the mountains for the governmental institutions rising up out of the social body, while the sea, always restless, sometimes raging, stands for the discontented masses of humanity, not very respectful toward law and order, increasing in numbers, and at present held back by the bulwarks of conservatism, but always beating against them, wearing down and devouring when they can. How forcible is the symbolic language of Psalm 46: 1-3, thus interpreted!



The "heavens" of the existing order of things consist of Satan and his agencies, wicked spirits in high places (Eph. 6: 12), and of systems and theories of error and superstition foisted by him upon the darkened minds of a too credulous race of fallen beings. Satan is the "prince of the power of the air," or region of mental and spiritual control; he it is who has so effectually worked in the hearts of the "children of disobedience," that he has marked out the downward "course of this world." Satan is "the god [mighty one] of this world," and the whole world is under his influence.—Eph. 2: 1-3; 2 Cor. 4: 4; 1 John 5: 18, 19.

Some there are, so much "ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 11: 3, 14; 2: 11), that they deny the personality of this Satan or Devil. In support of their contention, they state that the word "Satan," transferred from the Hebrew language to English, means "adversary," and that the word "Devil" is from the Greek *diabolus*, meaning "false accuser," and that these words are applied to human beings, even to women, and also to systems of evil. Against this, nothing need be said, for it is quite true. But when asked to believe that the chief "Satan," or "adversary," "the god of this world," is but the depraved human mind, or an evil principle, without personality, we must dissent; and in this connection would ask for thoughtful consideration of the seventh and eighth chapters of Exodus. In chapter 7: 8-10, we find Moses and Aaron, the messengers of Jehovah, performing miracles before Pharaoh, by way of showing their credentials. In verses 11, 12, we are told that the magicians of Egypt did the same by their enchantments. In 7: 20-22, we

have another miracle by God's messengers, and duplication by the magicians; and yet once more in 8: 6, 7. But in 8: 16-19, the course of the magicians is checked, and they confess themselves stopped by "the finger of God." We find no difficulty in believing that the power of the personal Jehovah was exercised in the miracles performed through Moses and Aaron. We know perfectly well that such wonders were, and are, beyond natural human powers, either of Moses and Aaron, or of the Egyptian sorcerers. What or whose power was exercised in the duplication, so far as allowed, of the wonders by the sorcerers? Are we not obliged to deduce, from these incidents, the existence of a power *above the human*, therefore spiritual; *opposed to Jehovah*, as evidenced by the effort to discredit Moses and Aaron; *intelligent*, as evidenced by the duplication, so far as possible, of the divine credentials; *evil*, as evidenced by the effort to keep the Israelites in bondage; but *not supreme* (thank God!), as evidenced by inability to go beyond certain bounds? If the personality and almighty power of God may be "understood by the things that are made" (Rom. 1: 20), may not the personality and limited power of Satan be understood by the things he was allowed to make—snakes and frogs?

### **"Reserved Unto Fire"**

In 2 Peter 3: 7, we are told that "the heavens and earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire," and the thought is repeated in verses 10-12. The reading of God's Word has become distasteful to many because of the unreasonable things it is supposed to teach; for example, that the

beautiful earth, on which we live, is to be destroyed, the lamp of day extinguished, and the thousand eyes of night forever closed. The verse now under consideration is supposed to be the bulwark of such teaching. But we encourage you to look again at verse 7, and consider the significance of the words, "heavens and earth *which are now*." Do not the words, "which are now," clearly intimate that the present "heavens and earth" are not the same as those *which were then*, "the world *that then was*"? But the physical earth and the atmospheric and astronomical heavens are the same now as they were before the flood, and they cannot, therefore, come into consideration, either as having been destroyed or as being about to perish. The *order of things* that then was, composed of "heavens" and "earth," perished in the flood; another *order of things* has succeeded it, and this order, consisting of the symbolic "heavens" and symbolic "earth," *which are now*, is to be destroyed by the fire of a great time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.

The Hebrews were not unacquainted with the use of the symbol, "fire," as indicative of trouble and destruction. In his Song of Triumph, at the close of the wilderness journey, Moses used highly figurative language to express the experiences of the children of Israel. A reading of the whole Song will make clear the symbolic use of the word "fire." (Deut. 32: 22-24.)

"A fire is kindled in mine anger,  
And shall burn unto the lowest sheol,  
And shall consume the earth with her increase,  
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

. . . . .

They shall be burnt with hunger,  
And devoured with burning heat"—i.e., fever or pestilence.

For other instances, similarly descriptive, see Judges 9: 15, 20, 56, 57; Psa. 78: 21, 31 (Here the "fire" is a plague—Num. 11: 33); Isa. 33: 11, 12; 34: 5-10; 43: 2; Amos, chaps. 1 and 2. The trouble upon Babylon was described as a "destroying wind," a "time of threshing," an overflowing of the sea, judgment by the sword and burning with fire. (Jer. 51: 1, 33, 42, 47-50, 58.) The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar was also described as a fire.—Ezek. 30: 8, 10, 16.

John the Baptist, presumably knowing that his hearers would understand his meaning, described, under the symbol of fire, the trouble coming upon the Jews—"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3: 12.) Our Lord said, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12: 49.) And when in explaining the parable of the wheat and the tares, he said, "And shall cast them into a *furnace of fire*," no doubt the disciples would think of Jer. 11: 4, where the land of Egypt, in which the children of Israel were evil entreated, is called, "the iron furnace."—Matt. 13: 42.

But, while attentive consideration of Peter's words brings us inevitably to the conclusion that the Divine Spirit was not inspiring him to teach that the planet and the universe generally are to disappear in an awful conflagration, it will be interesting, and helpful to faith, to keep in mind a few other portions of Scripture, on the same subject.

God made promise to Abraham (Gen. 13: 14-17), subsequently confirmed and ratified over a sacrifice (Gen. 15: 7-21), that he should, with his descendants, become the owner of a certain portion of land which he saw, and through which he walked as a pilgrim and a sojourner, but never as a possessor. (Heb. 11: 8, 9; Acts 7: 2-5.) This promise became a favourite with the Jewish sect of the Pharisees, who used it as the basis for an argument in favour of the resurrection of the dead, against the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. (Luke 20: 27.) The argument was, and is, good; if God promised the land to Abraham, who died without realising the fulfilment thereof, he must be brought back from death, and the promise then accomplished. We are not to suppose that death can hinder the fulfilment of the least of the divine promises. (Ezek. 37: 12-14.) But this precious promise to Abraham, duly ratified and confirmed, is altogether made of no effect, if, as some think, the resurrection day is to witness the destruction of the land which Abraham saw, and in which he walked. It behooves us to cast away the foundationless tradition, and to retain the promise of God, for it is a "faithful saying."

Our Lord taught His disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6: 10.) From countless hearts, privately and in concert, audibly and silently, has this prayer risen to the throne of the heavenly grace, and many have cried, "How long, O Lord?" But the tradition, which makes void the Word (Mark 7: 13), would have us believe that the advent of the King and

His Kingdom means the destruction of the earth on which we live. Does God's will being done in heaven mean wholesale destruction there? And if the earth were destroyed, how could God's will be done on it?

There is yet another statement that deserves consideration in this connection. In Isaiah 45: 18 we read, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, he created it not *in vain*, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else." Young's "Analytical Concordance" defines the Hebrew *tohu*, here rendered *in vain*, as "ruin, vacancy, vanity," so that this part of the text really means, "He created it not to be ruined," or, taken in connection with the following clause, which, after the manner of Hebrew poetry, may be considered antithetic, it would read, "He created it not to be vacant; He formed it to be inhabited." Thus again does the light of the Word scatter the darkness of the tradition.

The Almighty has no controversy with the planet, earth, but He has a just cause against the symbolic "earth," or social order; also against the symbolic "heavens," or spiritual controlling powers. He is exceedingly indignant and fiercely angry with the present order of things, "the heavens and the earth, *which are now*," and is even now arising "to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2: 10-21), to cause the earth (social, political and commercial arrangements) to "fall and not rise again," while He punishes "the host of the high ones that are on high ["wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Fph. 6: 12, margin) ecclesiastical systems and all systems of superstition—the symbolic "heavens"],

and the kings of the earth upon the earth [influential persons and institutions in every department of society as at present constituted]." (Isa. 24: 19-23; 26: 21.) A most graphic description of this is given in Zeph. 3: 8, 9—"Wait ye upon Me, saith Jehovah; until the day that I rise up to the prey; for My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger: for *all the earth* shall be devoured with

### **"The Fire of My Jealousy"**

Do we see the nations being gathered now to some locality on the earth? No, we do not; and there is no reason to expect such an event. Nevertheless, the gathering of the nations is proceeding most marvelously; it is transpiring under our eyes; every reader of these words is assisting to bring it about.

Geographically considered, the nations are pushing forward to occupy the waste places of the earth, and they are extending their influence over vastly more territory than was dreamed of four centuries ago, or than would have been possible then. But the recent (about a century) great increase of knowledge, in fulfilment of divine prophecy (Daniel 12: 4; Psa. 97: 4), has so wonderfully facilitated the "running to and fro," that Britain is now nearer to the most remote of her colonies than a century ago she was to Canada. The number of miles is no less now, but the ability to cover them is increased. When the writer first crossed the Atlantic Ocean, he was "out of the world" for a week;

on another occasion, there was wireless communication with a steamer, out of sight, when the voyage was half accomplished; now, the Atlantic voyagers have their daily newspaper the same as the people ashore. A hundred years ago, communication between Australia and England required at least three months; now, three hours will do it. For this purpose, Australia is now 1-720th the distance from home she was a century ago. Can we say that the nations are not being "gathered"?

The nations are also being "gathered" in bonds of sympathy with one another. That is to say, the spirit of discontent and unrest in the world is causing the rulers of all nations to realise that their interests are identical, and that they will need to do something if they desire to preserve their present positions for their heirs, if not for themselves. And so we hear of increasing fraternal feelings among the rulers and statesmen, efforts to arrange their differences by "Arbitration Courts," "Peace Congresses," etc., etc., and, with every indication of the increase of the peaceful disposition of nations toward each other, we are told that the necessity for war is gradually disappearing, and ultimately will vanish away. We sympathise with Peace, and our own desire and effort is that we might live at peace with all men (Rom. 12: 18); yet we fear that the signs of the times are not rightly interpreted by some of the great ones of earth. (1 Thes. 5: 3.) For while there is undoubtedly a greater friendliness than ever between rulers of nations, and it may even be that efforts to avoid international war on a large scale will be measurably successful, there is another



factor that requires to be reckoned with; viz., the growing discontent, *among the people*, with present political, social and commercial arrangements. While the great ones of earth and their sympathisers are being "gathered" into a community of interest, the masses are being similarly "gathered," largely by means of the Socialist propaganda, in order that they, too, may take their share of the "fierce anger" of the Lord. Though sympathising with much, very much, that the Socialists would like to introduce, and admitting the sincerity and devotion of many of its adherents, the writer cannot recognise Socialism, much less Anarchy, as the remedy for present unsatisfactory conditions. It cannot be questioned that in all nations the former is making tremendous strides in the favour of the people, and that they mean to try, if they can, to substitute it for the present order. As has often been pointed out by able publicists, Socialism cannot hope to accomplish the desired reformation, because the mainspring of selfishness is not suitable to drive such a machine, and Socialism has no remedy for the disease of selfishness, with which we are all afflicted—incurably, so far as our own efforts go. If it had such a remedy, it is doubtful whether the "consent of the governed" could be gained for its application.

There is another reason why Socialism or any other human remedy cannot effect the needed cure of the body politic, and that is, *because it is not God's way*. To us this reason appeals more than any other. The people are discontented—daily more so—and we expect that they will be allowed to manifest their discontent in an uprising so terrible, that it will completely destroy

present institutions. Already the "gathering" is causing such friction and fervent heat, that the "elements" of society must shortly melt, and the earth (social) with all its works (institutions) be burned up. Thus, in an apparently natural way, will Jehovah pour His indignation and fierce anger and fiery jealousy upon the "gathered" nations and "assembled" kingdoms, to destroy them utterly.—Zeph. 3: 8.

Ecclesiasticism and superstition, and religious error of all kinds, in which for centuries the people have been bound, and which have hidden the truth from them, will not escape the Lord's anger. For the "heavens" are also to be "dissolved," and are to "pass away with a great noise," in the impending overthrow. "Now, He hath promised, saying, Yet once more, I shake not the earth (society) only, but also heaven (spiritual influences and organisations). And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made; that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." (Heb. 12: 26, 27.) There have been troubles, severe ones, which have sorely tried men and institutions, but the one to come ("yet once more") is to be the most searching of all—"such as never was since there was a nation." (Daniel 12: 1.) Everything that totters under its "shaking" must be removed, whether it be highly esteemed among men or not. And this trouble will be so searching, and the "shaking" and "burning" so thorough, that another such demonstration will never be required.—Matt. 24: 21.

While the coming trouble will effect the total disintegration of present ecclesiastical and social arrange-

ments, and must, undoubtedly, occasion much loss of life, it is not to be allowed to go on until all life is destroyed from the earth. Matt. 24: 22 shows this, and the same is indicated in Psalm 46: 8-10. In Zeph. 3: 9 we are informed that, after pouring out indignation, wrath and fiery jealousy upon the nations and kingdoms, God will "turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." His controversy is not so much with the ignorant and down-trodden masses of humanity as with the institutions of present governments—political, ecclesiastical, financial and social—which oppress them.

### **New Heavens and a New Earth**

Now we begin to realise something of the divine purpose. God will let the discontent of the peoples work itself out in a delirium of fury, until they come to a realisation of their own impotency, and will then take steps to deal with them in a manner to bring about all the good things they desired and vainly strove to attain. Those who have faith in the divine promises, and are not disposed to scoff at them (2 Pet. 3: 13, 3, 4), will rejoice in the provision that God has made for the future. New "heavens," consisting of Jesus and His joint-heirs, instead of the deposed Satan and his wicked spirits, will exercise their all powerful and benevolent, though strict, rule over a "new earth" or social arrangement. And if the present rulers have "derived their powers from the consent of the governed," it will not be so in the new order of things.

The divinely-appointed rulers of that time will be righteous, and will be plentifully endowed with power and authority, to execute judgment. They will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet. (Isa. 28: 17, Am. R.V.) This may not, at first, be esteemed altogether pleasant or desirable by some who have prospered under present imperfect arrangements, but God's Kingdom is appointed to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven, and it will surely succeed, because all His purposes come to pass. (Isa. 14: 27.) When the people become properly acquainted with the "pure language" of Gospel Truth that will then be turned to them, we believe they will be glad to learn of the Lord and to call upon His name with one consent.—Isa. 2: 2-4.

If the motive power of the present and past has been *blind selfishness*, that of the future will be *discerning love*. Or, may we say, men will learn then, as now they do not, that true love to God and one's neighbour is really the highest manifestation of an *enlightened self-interest*; because it is the only state in which, and the only mode of life by which, perfect happiness can be secured to the individual, the community, the nation and the world.

While not seeking to discount the Bible prophecies concerning the awful effects of the coming trouble, let us rather endeavour to emphasise the blessings that are to follow. It is in view of these things (2 Peter 3: 11, 14) that the Apostle exhorts to holy living, and that we should be *diligent*, that we "may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

### III.

## The Eternal Purpose

—Ephesians 3: 11.—

**D**ISPENSATIONAL TRUTH has at all times been accorded a prominent place in Scripture.

The message for the day has, from time to time, been sent by God through His honoured servants the prophets, and even the Son of God had such a message to deliver. (Matt. 3: 1, 2; 4: 17; Heb. 1:1.) The message has not invariably been honoured by those to whom it has been sent; yet there have always been some among the professors of religion who have been attentive to know the truth message which it might please God to send. No doubt there has always been some foundation for the complaint made by Elijah—"Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But equally true has it always been, and is now, "What saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."—Matt. 23: 29-31; Rom. 11: 3, 4; 2 Tim. 2: 19.

When the Messiah was present among them, the lack of attention to truth then due prevented those who

were well versed in the traditions and in the letter of their Scriptures from discerning the day of their visitation. (Matt. 16: 1, 4; Luke 19: 44.) Similarly, disregard of the dispensational method of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" is a weighty cause of the confusion to-day existing in Christendom.

The chapter preceding this has illustrated in a small way the necessity of "rightly *dividing* the Word." We have found three great orders of things mentioned in the Scriptures, and have seen that some things were true of the first that could not be stated of the second or third. For example, in Noah's day it was truth for the time that a flood was coming. But it would not be right for us to preach that the present order of things is to be destroyed by a flood of waters, nor will such preaching be appropriate at any future time. (Gen. 8: 21, 22; 9: 8-17.) It was also seen that Satan is the prince of this world, but that our Lord Jesus Christ is to be King in the promised new "heavens" and "earth." If Satan is prince now, "the god of this world," present evil conditions need not be ascribed to Jehovah, nor to our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, we feel a sense of relief at realising the truth that as yet our Lord is not reigning over the world, nor trying to do so. If he were, the present state of the world would be no credit to His government. But a right division of the Word on this subject clears up many things hitherto obscure. Our Lord said, "My Kingdom is not of this *world*" (Greek *kosmos*, meaning "arrangement," the same as in 2 Peter 3: 6), but He taught the disciples to pray and to expect that His Kingdom would some day be established in power on

this earth. (Matt. 6: 10.) The fact that we have been praying, "Thy Kingdom come," should help us to realise that it has not yet come, and that we need to divide the Word of truth rightly as applied to the three "worlds" or orders of things. As we read the Bible, we should ask ourselves to which "world" the portion is intended to apply, thus—

The world that then was— 2 Peter 3: 6.	The "heavens" and the "earth" which are now— 2 Peter 3: 7.	New "heavens" and new "earth"— 2 Peter 3: 13.

So we shall come to realise that the planet earth may be likened to a stage, and the "worlds" may be likened to the acts of a great drama. Each part is played and finished, but the stage remains. "The earth abideth for ever."—Ecc. 1: 4.

While the things permitted in the three "worlds" furnish striking evidences of the necessity of rightly dividing the Word of truth, the evidences along this line will be multiplied by a consideration of the "ages," for these specially represent to us God's Purpose or PLAN, the work He has devised and has been carrying on. The word "age" means a period of time, of greater or less duration, and is a translation, in the New Testament, of the Greek word *aion*. It is unfortunate that this Greek word has often been mistranslated in the Authorised Version, usually by the word "world," which is in no sense an adequate interpretation of the original, and which obscures the meaning of much in the teaching of the Lord and the Apostles. Instances of this mistranslation are—"The harvest is the

end of the *world*." "What shall be the sign . . . of the end of the *world*?" "Written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the *world* are come." "By whom also He made the *worlds*." "According to the *eternal purpose*, which He purposed in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Matt. 13: 39; 24: 3; 1 Cor. 10: 11; Heb. 1: 2; Eph. 3: 11.) In each of the texts above cited, the word *age* should be substituted for "world"; the plural form should be used in 1 Cor. 10: 11 and Heb. 1: 2; in Eph. 3: 11 the words "eternal purpose" obscure the meaning which is more clearly expressed by the Revised Version marginal reading, a "purpose of the ages." Many other instances could be mentioned, but the student will readily find them with the aid of an analytical or exhaustive concordance.

We are to understand, by Eph. 3: 11, that the divine plan comprehends a number of ages or periods of time. And when verse 10 is considered in connection, following the translations of the *Emphatic Diaglott*, J. B. Rotherham and the Revised Version marginal reading, we learn that these ages are so arranged as to express the great diversities of God's wisdom—"the *much diversified* wisdom of God, *according to* a Plan of the Ages, which He formed in the Anointed Jesus, our Lord." We should expect, and we shall find, that the ages comprehended in the divine plan will exhibit these diversities of divine wisdom; and we shall be able to identify the ages by noting the introductions of the diversities.

### The Patriarchal Age

The first of these ages began in Abraham's day, when God called him, and he accepted the call. Be-



fore this, God had made certain statements about a future triumph of righteousness over evil (Gen. 3: 15), but no record of a very plain utterance has been preserved. When He called Abraham, He condescended to express His purpose more explicitly, and Abraham was able to gather that it was the divine intention to grant great blessings and dignities to his "Seed," and subsequently to bless all the families of the earth *through* the "Seed." (Gen. 12: 1-3; 18: 18; 22: 15-18.) While the plan itself was formulated before the creation of man, as indicated by the statement that Christ was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13: 8), the call of Abraham was the beginning of the *working out* of that great Plan, which is ultimately to have a glorious culmination. God often uses agencies for the accomplishment of His purposes, and we need, therefore, feel no surprise that it has pleased Him to appoint that some of His creatures should be used for the blessing of the many. If this be His way, let us be glad that He can not only provide a blessing for all the-families of the earth, but also that He can honour some with the privilege of being the instruments in its distribution.

The wisdom of God arranged that Abraham alone, of his day and generation, should be the chosen one—the elect, if you prefer. It is not asserted that there was no one else in all the earth at that time who would have been as suitable for God's purpose; had that been the case, the Omniscient would have been exceedingly limited, and the question would not have been whether to choose Abraham or another; it would have been Abraham or none. Melchisedek, King of Salem,

and Priest of the Most High, was a contemporary of Abraham, and the fact that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek and received his blessing is cited to show that Melchisedek was a greater personage than Abraham. (Heb. 7: 4-7.) Since there was a priest of the Most High in those times, there must also have been a people on whose behalf he served, so that there may have been a good supply of material from which the Lord could have drawn for His purpose. But, be that as it may, Abraham was the chosen. There was no competition of candidates to demonstrate which of them should be honoured; God simply spoke to Abraham, and made him the proposition.

It does not appear that Abraham was coerced into this arrangement; so we are not to take that extreme view of God's election. Rather, the manner of stating the proposition (Gen 12: 1-3) was a test of Abraham's faith. He was invited to leave his country and people, and to go over into a land of which he knew nothing; if he would do so, God would bless him, and through him all the families of the earth. The fact that Abraham made the removal indicates a formal understanding or covenant, his part of which he immediately began to perform. An overland journey of about two thousand miles, with flocks and herds, from prosperous conditions to unknown perils, is not to be lightly undertaken. The usual course is for the unprosperous to emigrate to countries and conditions which they feel reasonably certain will be better than those left behind. But Abraham could trust, even where he could not trace; and of him it is written (Heb. 11: 8),

"he went out, not knowing whither he went." Had he been deficient in faith, he must surely have failed to overcome the initial test, in which case he would not have made his calling and election sure, and, presumably, the honour offered to him would have passed to another. Therefore, while acknowledging God's perfect right to offer his special favours to whom he will, it still remains clear that these offers are so made as to test the faith of the prospective beneficiary, with a view to determining his appreciation of the blessing, as manifested by the heartiness of his obedience to the divine call, and hence his fitness for the position.

Abraham never became the blesser; he did not in his lifetime possess the land promised him; but he became the inheritor of the promise, which will be fulfilled to him at a later day. (Heb. 11: 13-19, 39; Acts 7: 3-8.) He was told that in Isaac, the son born of promise, his seed should be called (Gen. 21: 12); but even this did not say that Isaac himself should be the seed, only that the promised One should come in his line. Isaac became the heir of the Covenant (Gen. 17: 21), and during his lifetime, after his father's death, he was the one man in all the world who was recognised and dealt with pursuant to the divine plan. After his death, Jacob was the only man in the world who had any rights in connection with the grand and gracious promise made to Abraham, the divine wisdom having decreed that during these three generations only one individual from each should be chosen. The divine choice of Jacob and the rejection of Esau, as described in Rom. 9: 10-12, were particularly arbitrary, and they are made to bear a most

horrible aspect by the thought, without warrant introduced, that Jacob was chosen to be saved forever in heaven, whereas Esau was rejected to be tortured forever in "hell." The Bible nowhere says that such was the purpose. But it is clear that the one was chosen to inherit the original promise, made to Abraham, and that the other, rejected from this his birth-right, because he had more respect for a mess of pottage than for it, was relegated to subserviency to the heir of the promise.—Rom. 9: 12.

At the time of Jacob's death was exhibited a conspicuous "diversity" of divine wisdom in that the promise was confirmed to all of Jacob's sons (instead of to one of them), and to their posterity after them; and they became the nation or twelve tribes of Israel. Such a demonstration of "diversity" in God's dealings must not be overlooked. Therefore, according to the reading of Eph. 3: 10, 11, "*much diversified wisdom of God according to a Plan of the Ages,*" we are obliged to recognise that at Jacob's death the Patriarchal Age came to its end and the Jewish or Israelitish Age began. The Patriarchal Age was comparatively short—only about two and a half centuries—yet even that seems a long time for a single operation of the Divine Plan, dealing with only three men and their wives in respect to the promise of blessing all the families of the earth. Let us take from this a lesson of patience, and of trust in the Lord, so that if in our perplexity we begin to think his work is progressing too slowly we may not be discouraged, but still keep on doing with our might what our hand finds to do.

As we reflect that in the space of 250 years God had selected only some half-dozen according to his purpose, and had not even spoken to others, when quite within his power to do so, thoughts and questions arise for consideration. We realise that God is in no hurry; evidently he has appointed certain works for certain times, and while he sees to it that his appointments for "times and seasons" do not fail, he is equally careful to allow no infringement of any work upon the times appointed for other activities. We naturally question, What about the thousands not approached and dealt with during the Patriarchal Age? Because in those days nothing was said to them about salvation, are they relegated to indescribable woe? It would be unspeakably sad, were we obliged to think this. Let us not hastily consign them to so terrible a fate. The Bible does not teach it, and we have just been seeing that in the Lord's wisdom certain persons during the Patriarchal Age were honoured with the call or invitation to become *blessers* of "all the families of the earth." If this invitation meant that, after having been themselves blessed, this high honour was in store for a special class, what shall we suppose is implied on behalf of the others? Shall the honoured ones "bless" them with everlasting pain? Let us hold fast to the promise, and steadfastly hope that something better than this will yet appear.

### **The Jewish Age**

The Jewish Age was, roughly, seven times the duration of the Patriarchal Age. Instead of dealing with one individual at a time, from generation to generation, the Eternal was now pleased to take unto himself

all the posterity of Jacob, and deal with them collectively as His people. He allowed them to be afflicted in Egypt, brought them thence on "eagles' wings" unto Himself, to Mount Sinai, and there proposed to them to enter into a Covenant, to the effect that if they would keep His words, they should be unto Him "a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19: 1-6.) The people were well pleased at this prospect, and in due course the Covenant, sometimes called the Law Covenant, was ratified. (Ex. 24: 7, 8.) Never, during all the centuries of the Jewish Age, did the Lord vouchsafe to take into His favour any other nation—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3: 2; Psalm 147: 19, 20.) He sent the holy prophets to Israel; He committed unto them His oracles, so that they had much advantage every way (Rom. 3: 1, 2); but none of this was for the Gentile outsiders; all was for the Israelites, the people of the Covenant. He fought for His people, destroying armies for their sakes; He punished their lapses into idolatry by permitting the Gentiles to oppress them; yet He was always ready to hear their cry when in their affliction they turned to Him. He instructed them in His ways, rebuking and entreating them with the most marvellous patience and love; but so little were divine favours appreciated by them, that the Almighty was obliged to say, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."—Rom. 10: 21.

The favour to this people culminated in the sending of God's Son to them—to *them*; for we are not to allow ourselves to overlook the scripturally stated fact that

"He came *to his own*." (John 1: 11.) Nor are we to forget that His ministry did not extend beyond the land of Palestine. Neither should we ignore our Lord's own recognition of the limitations imposed upon Him by divine wisdom, in that He said, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 15: 24.) In harmony with these limitations He commanded His disciples, when sending them on a tour, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10: 5, 6.

Bearing in mind the promise made to the Jews, when they entered into the Covenant, that if they kept it they should become "a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19: 5, 6), and recalling that John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Saviour, and our Lord Himself preached that the Kingdom was at hand (Matt. 3: 1, 2; 4: 17, 23), the time being fulfilled (Mark 1: 14, 15), we apprehend that since so conspicuous a part of our Lord's ministry was the annunciation of the Kingdom, He could not possibly, in the circumstances, have been sent outside Palestine or to others than the Jewish people; because they, being the only nation related to the Covenant, were the only people that could have an interest in such a message, and, at that time, a right to hear it. To this agree the Apostle's words to the Jews of Antioch—"It was *necessary* that the word of God should first have been spoken to you" (Acts 13: 46); and there is much more to the same effect in both Old and New Testaments. Jehovah is a covenant keeping God; not one of his words falls void to the ground. Having promised the

Jews that under certain conditions their nation should become a kingdom of priests (not some of them kings and some of them priests, as during the Jewish Age, but all of them kings and all of them priests), He sent His Son to proclaim the time at hand for them to enter the kingdom and priesthood. But the Jewish expectation differed so radically from the reality which was offered them that they, as a nation, repudiated the Message and crucified the Messenger. Only a few were without guile and ready to receive with meekness the Word, and to enter into the Kingdom opportunities. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not," is the sad description given of the apparent failure of His ministry to that people. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He liberty to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name." (John 1: 11, 12.) These last were the guileless ones, and they entered into what the Lord had promised, while the nominal mass was rejected from favour and their city destroyed. (Matt. 23: 37, 38.) In this way was the double prophecy of John the Baptist fulfilled—(1) "He shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit, and (2) with fire; He will (1) gather His wheat into the garner, but He will (2) burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3: 11, 12.) The guileless "Israelites indeed" were (1) baptised with the Holy Spirit and were gathered into the "garner" of the "great salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord" (Heb. 2: 3); the remainder were (2) baptised with the fire of an awful time of trouble thirty odd years later. So, though our Lord's mission to the Jews was apparently



not successful, yet He accomplished two very important parts of the divine purpose. He demonstrated His loyalty and obedience to the Father, thereby winning great exaltation (Phil. 2: 7-11; Heb. 5: 6-10; Rev. 3: 21); and by the grace of God He "tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2: 9.) He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15: 3), and He was raised again the third day for our justification. (Rom. 4: 25.) The accomplishment of these two things was not only important but absolutely necessary; and, as we proceed in our study, we shall see in them the perfect manifestation of divine wisdom, love, justice and power.

### **The Gospel Age**

The Jewish Age came to its end, as above described, and has been succeeded by the Gospel Age, which is to be of like duration. The "diversity" of wisdom which requires us to note the end of the Jewish Age and the beginning of the Gospel Age is not hard to recognise. If God gave exclusive favours to Israel for eighteen centuries, and then cast them off from these favours; if He committed to them His oracles, and afterwards sent "blindness in part" upon them, giving His oracles to the Gentiles; we may be sure that such "diversities" are not to be unheeded, if we would "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

Another "diversity" marking the close of the Jewish Age and the beginning of the Gospel Age is most strikingly brought to our attention by a comparison of our Lord's two commissions to His disciples, the one recorded in Matt. 10: 5, 6, and the reason for it in Matt.

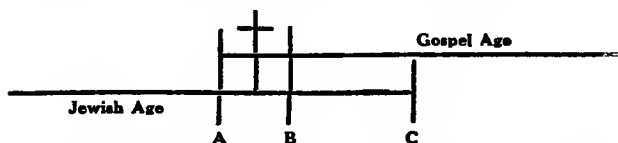
15: 24, the other recorded in Matt. 28: 19, and the reason for it in verse 18. Comparison will be facilitated by placing the two in parallel columns.

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 15: 24; 10: 5, 6.

"Then the eleven disciples [Judas now excluded] went away into Galilee into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."—Matt. 28: 16-19.

Why this great "diversity" in so short a time? Because "the ends of the ages" (1 Cor. 10: 11, literally translated) had come. That generation was witnessing the closing of the Jewish age and the beginning of the Gospel Age. That is to say, while the one was closing, the other was beginning, so that the two were co-existent for a time; thus,



Several common points of time there were in the transition period. "A" marks the beginning of our Lord's ministry, when He came with the "fan" of truth in His hand to thoroughly purge His "floor," separating "wheat" from "chaff." (Matt. 3: 12.) This occupied three-and-a-half years to the midst of the "week" of years, when He was crucified, or, as the Prophet was

inspired to foretell it, "cut off, but not for Himself." (Dan 9: 26, 27.) But if this ministry was important as marking the closing of the Jewish Age, it was equally so as indicating the beginning of the Gospel Age, because in His teaching were expressed things kept secret from the foundation of the world, and which only "began to be spoken by the Lord." (Matt. 13: 35; Heb. 2: 3.) Two important events we find on either side of the sacred Cross: before it, the abandoning of the Jewish house to desolation (Matt. 23: 36-38), following it, the Pentecostal outpouring (Acts 2: 1-4); the first of these having to do with the closing of the old age, the other being more especially a mark of the beginning of the new. "B" marks the end of the "week" of years in the midst of which Messiah was cut off, and during which the favour of the Gospel was still to be restricted to the Jews, until the "most holy" had been "anointed." (Dan. 9: 24-26.) But if it marks in a special manner the end of exclusive favour to Israel, we believe it may also be considered the mark of the time when the Gospel began to go to the Gentiles, being taken first by Peter to the house of Cornelius. (Acts 10.) "C" marks the consummation of the Jewish Age in the destruction of Jerusalem, the baptism of fire. By this time, the Gospel Age was forty years under way.

But we must return to the Cross to find the reason for the "diversity" between the two commissions above quoted, and the explanation is found in the inspired words of Rom. 14: 9—"For to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." From this it may be gathered that

since His death and resurrection, and because of them, our Redeemer occupies a more exalted station than He had before, which thought agrees perfectly with His own words in the second commission, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," and with the Apostle's language in Phil. 2: 9, where, after telling of the Redeemer's obedience unto death, "even the death of the cross," he says, "*wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him." Now we can realise that in the first commission our Lord could send His disciples no further than He was Himself sent, whereas under the second commission they are at liberty and under command to go to all nations, "beginning at Jerusalem," because, on account of His obedience unto death, He had become Lord of all. By giving Himself as the "ransom-price for all," He purchased the race, and secured the right, as Abraham's "seed," to bless all those for whom He died.

### **The Work of the Gospel Age**

Those who have followed the presentation of the ages thus far, and have noted that one of the "diversities" between the Patriarchal and Jewish Ages was that the work of the latter was on a larger scale than that of the former, in that it dealt with a people instead of with merely a few individuals, will not be surprised at the thought that the work of the Gospel Age is on a larger scale than was that of the Jewish Age, in that during the Gospel Age God has been dealing with many individuals out of all peoples, nations and tongues, instead of with only one people in one land.

Yet there are limitations to be observed, and we must not allow ourselves hastily to suppose that because our Lord sent His disciples into all nations He did so with a view to the enlightenment and conversion to Himself of all. This view, while held by many earnest and zealous Christians, some of whom have been striving to bring about the end which they suppose God desires, is not justifiable by Scripture or by facts.

God said, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but *it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" (Isa. 55: 10, 11.) Consider the religious state of the world as exhibited in the accompanying diagram, exhibited at the late Pan-Anglican Congress, and say whether, after nearly two thousand years of preaching, the Gospel may fairly be said to have *accomplished* the conversion or even the enlightenment of the world. The 796 millions of sin-darkened heathen of the present generation, who have never yet heard that Jesus died for them, answer, as with one voice, NO!

Listen to the complaints of discouraged preachers, who tell us of the decay of Christendom, of its waning influence in former strongholds, and of the blighting power of worldliness in the nominal Church, and ask yourself whether you would like to assert that the

Word of God has *prospered* in making saints of all Christendom. Surely not!\*

For all those who have respect unto God's Word, and faith in His power, there can be but one conclusion reached from these considerations; viz., if God's Word has not *accomplished* the conversion or even the enlightenment of Heathendom during the Gospel Age, that is in itself sufficient evidence that God was not

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\*The following report was recently rendered of the condition and influence of the Free Churches in Liverpool:—

"The president of the Free Church Council, a layman of consecration and initiative, secured an expert to spend six months in obtaining a comprehensive survey of the city. The man chosen was a son of Dr. Alfred Rowland, a prominent Congregational pastor, and one of the official English delegates to the recent Louisville International Sunday School Convention. Mr. Rowland has now issued a report, which not only bristles with startling figures and facts, but, as a writer in the 'British Weekly' says, is the summons of a seer. The facts which he cites, relating to church attendance, even in thoroughly Protestant districts, are discouraging. In seventeen representative churches, only 12½ per cent. of the sittings were occupied, as against 40 per cent. in 1881, when the last church census was taken. The evening congregations had shrunk in the same period from 57 per cent. to 28 per cent., and what is true of Liverpool, the third city in size in the United Kingdom, is probably measurably true of other large cities, like Birmingham, Bradford, Sheffield and Leeds."—*Literary Digest*.

That is, as we understand it, the popular attractiveness of the evening services in these seventeen representative churches which, in 1881, filled about half (57 per cent.) their sittings now fills only about a fourth of their accommodation (28 per cent.); while the spiritually minded, who are supposed to be those that mostly attend the morning services, and who in 1881 occupied 40 per cent. of the accommodation, are now so reduced in numbers that only one-eighth of the sittings are required for them.

pleased that the Word should undertake that work in this time. And if the Word has not *prospered* in making saints of all Christendom, during the Gospel Age, that in itself is sufficient evidence that God did not send the Word for such a purpose during this age; for God's Word always *accomplishes* that which He pleases, and it always *prosper*s in the thing whereto He sends it. Our Lord explained the limitations of the Word during the Gospel Age, saying, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations; and then shall the end [of the age] come." (Matt. 24: 14, 3.) To give a *witness* or testimony to all nations is a different thing to an attempt at the conversion of all the individuals of all nations. Are we to conclude that God's interest in our poor race is to find no wider expression than that which has been visible during the Gospel Age? It would be disappointing indeed should we find ourselves obliged to admit this; let us for the present encourage faith by those beautiful words—"God so *loved the world*."

We are reminded here of the original promise to Israel, when they entered into Covenant with God at Mt. Sinai—"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests and an holy nation." (Ex. 19: 5, 6.) We have seen how God invited or called Abraham, and how, after passing test after test, Abraham made his calling and election sure to the honour of being a blesser of all the families of the earth. But Israel as a nation called and invited did not successfully pass the

tests, did not make their calling and election sure, and hence as a nation have been rejected from the honour of being "a Kingdom of priests and an holy nation." Will God therefore give up the idea of having kings and priests, a peculiar people, a holy nation? He would have had them had Israel kept the covenant; does Israel's national failure oblige Him to abandon this portion of His Plan?

A sorry comment on Isa. 14: 24, 27, would that be! God will not fail to have a "peculiar people"; He will have the "kings and priests"; the "holy nation" will be manifest to our sight in due time. Hear the Word, which describes what God has been pleased to allow it to accomplish, and in which work it doubtless has prospered, during the Gospel age. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded"; "there is a *remnant* according to the election of grace." (Rom. 11: 7, 6.) This agrees with John 1: 11, 12—"As many [of His own, the Jews] as received Him, to them gave He power [margin—privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." Those individual Israelites who believed in Jesus were accepted as probationary members of the Kingdom of Priests, but they were not sufficient to fill up the number required; hence the gospel message was extended to the Gentiles, that they also might receive "forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them [Jews] which are sanctified by faith." (Acts 13: 32-42, 46; 26: 20, 18.) Wherever the Apostles went they observed the prescribed rule (Rom. 1: 16), "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"; and the record is that while the



majority of the nation rejected the Word as above referred to, thousands of Jews received the Word gladly (Acts 2: 41, 42), and it was these believers who formed the nucleus of the Gospel Church, to which believing Gentiles were subsequently added. Further corroboration as to the work of the Gospel Age is found in Acts 15: 14—"God at the first did visit the Gentiles to *take out of them* a people for His name." This is the appointed work of the Gospel Age; and while it is on a much larger scale than were the operations of the Jewish and Patriarchal ages, it is still similar to those, in that it is a work of choosing, selecting or *electing*. There is even a certain arbitrariness exhibited in connection with this work, for God has chosen, as undoubtedly he had a right to do, to send the Gospel message generally westward and north-westward from Jerusalem, the starting point, and much less southward and eastward. It was not a question of nations competing for the honour of hearing the glad tidings, but of God providentially directing the courses of his servants. (Acts 16: 7-10.) The distinctive processes by which the election or selection of the members of the Gospel Church is conducted will be considered in a subsequent chapter, when it will, we trust, be clear that there are reasonable conditions to be fulfilled by all who become the elect.

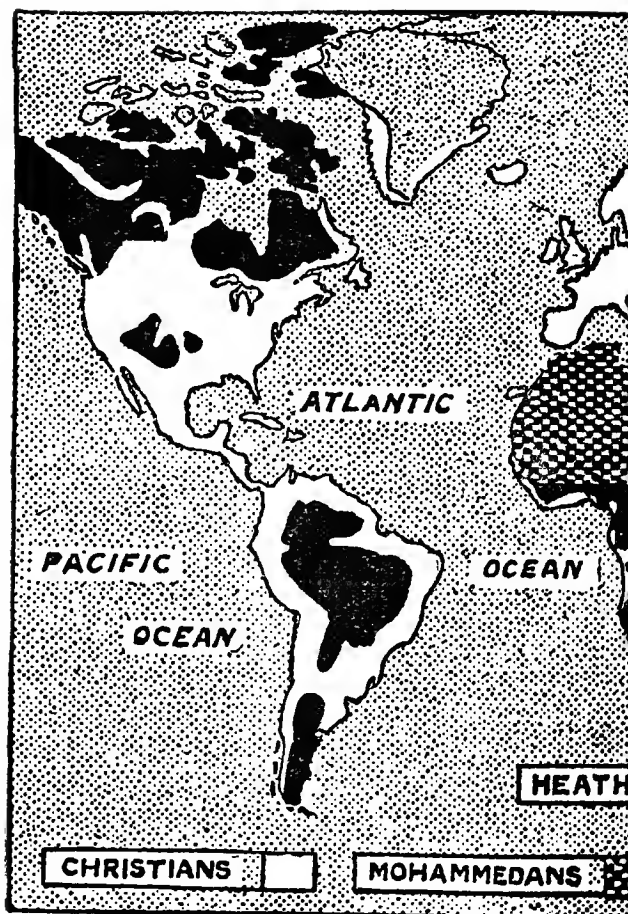
The faithful chosen of the Gospel Age are to be kings and priests unto God, and they are chosen unto sonship, that they should become joint heirs with the Redeemer. (Eph. 1: 4, 5; Rom. 8: 14-17.) The fact that this should be so, and that the joint heirs with

Christ should be chosen from among Gentiles, as well as a remnant from among the Jews, was not clearly revealed in former ages, as now made known. (Eph. 3: 3-7.) Says the Apostle Peter, writing to the "elect strangers," "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; . . . which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (I Pet. 2: 9, 10.) Our Lord Jesus Christ was in his own person the inheritor of this promise of the Law (Exod. 19: 5, 6), as well as the inheritor of the Abrahamic promise, having by faithful obedience observed all the precepts of the Law to do them. Hence, he became, in accordance with the divine oath, and as explained in Heb. 5: 5-10; 7: 15-28, "a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec"; and, as stated in Heb. 3: 1-6, "High Priest of our profession" or order. Like Melchisedec, He is both king and priest, reigning now in the hearts of the believers (Col. 1: 13), and ministering for them in the heavens (Heb. 8: 1); and, thank God! His kingdom and priesthood will extend the blessing more widely after the underpriests who "suffer with Him" become joint heirs, united to Him in the glory. That the Christ (the Greek word means "Anointed," and corresponds exactly to the Hebrew word "Messiah") was to be a body composed of many members was not at all apprehended prior to the Gospel Age, and many do not even now discern this clear and beautiful teaching of the Scripture. The human body, composed of many members yet constituting but the one body, is frequently used to illustrate the relation subsisting between Jesus, the Head,

and the Church, the members of His body. (Eph. 1: 22, 23; 1 Cor. 12: 12-27.) And to become members of this "body," under Jesus, the Head, is the privilege held before those whom God is taking out from the nations—"a people for His name." A further statement of Scripture about the position of the faithful chosen of the Gospel Age is found in Gal. 3: 16, 29. Referring to the Abrahamic promise, the Apostle says: "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." But in verse 29 it is made quite plain that it is not only the individual, but also the collective, Christ that he means, for he says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Think of this; grasp its meaning; "Keep all these things, and ponder them in your heart!" Did ever such visions of grace and glory rise before the eye of faith as now appear to him who begins to comprehend the scope of the divine promise? For the Christ, the Seed, is not only *to be blessed*, but beyond that rises the summit of a grander height; this same Christ (collective), the Seed, is to be the *blessor*—THE BLESSER—aye, THE BLESSER—OF ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH.

Once, in the dark narrowness of our error-circumscribed minds, we may have thought that we were all right for heaven, and that the others were all bound for —. Now, thank God, the weapons of the Spirit have proved their mightiness to the pulling down of some of the strongholds, and the light—the shining light—is illuminating our opened minds. "God



Map of The World  
Exhibited at the Pan-Anglican  
Congress, London, 1908



Population of the World  
Classified according to their  
Religious Professions

# “THIS GENERATION”

(Statistics taken from Diagram published by the Church Missionary Association)

Protestants	-	150,000,000
Greek Catholics	-	110,000,000
Roman Catholics	-	231,000,000
Jews	-	7,000,000
Mohammedans	-	206,000,000
Heathens	-	796,000,000
Total	-	1,500,000,000

. . . hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ."—2 Cor. 4: 6, 4.

Once we may have contemplated with pleasure the "harps" and "crowns" which we believed were laid up for us, while we shuddered to think of the awful conditions prepared for some of our friends. Let us not now be unmindful of what the "harps" and "crowns" may mean to us, should we be so happy as to receive them; but let us also think of the good the Church will be permitted to do as kings and priests, and the privilege to be enjoyed, to resolve the discords which now prevail into the glad notes of harmony and peace.

Have we often queried in ourselves, and never were quite satisfied, as to the apparent slowness with which the Gospel had progressed for nearly twenty centuries? We need only to be reminded that the work arranged for the Gospel Age is not one of world wide enlightenment, but of choosing out a people from among the peoples. After this, another part of the divine programme will be carried on. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this, I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Acts 15: 14-17.) Here is plainly expressed teaching that after the taking out of

the "people for His name," both Jew and Gentile are to be blessed, the Jew in order that the Gentile may seek the Lord.

Have we rejoiced in the love that God had for the whole world, in that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us all (John 3: 16; Heb. 2: 9), and have we then felt perplexed at the thought that not all were being blessed as a result of that sacrifice? Let the Word dissolve our perplexities and confirm our joy. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." "For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But, "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8: 19-22.) Precisely so! How could it be supposed that the groaning creation should experience its deliverance before the Sons of God, the Christ, the "Seed," would be ready to deliver and bless them? This is why the blessing has not yet extended to all, and why "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth," or is delayed; the sons of God must first be manifested in the glory of their joint-heirship with the Son of God, at His second advent. (Col. 3: 4.) Then the "waiting" period will end, and the blessing will begin. Out of ashes shall rise beauty; mourning shall be turned into joy; the groaning spirit of heaviness shall be exorcised, and praise, filling every heart, shall employ every tongue—Isa. 61: 3, 4.

"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below!"



## **The Kingdom Age**

Following the Gospel Age, whose end will be coincident with the destruction of the present "heavens" and "earth," as described in an earlier chapter, will come another age in this marvellous "Plan of Ages."

The duration of the Kingdom Age will be a thousand years, whence the frequent designation "Millennial" Age. This is correct enough, if one have only the length of time in mind, for "millennial" is derived from two Latin words meaning "a thousand years." Our preference for "Kingdom Age" is because the word "millennium" has taken on the meaning of a glorious time of serenity, happiness and perfection, which definition does not accurately describe the thousand years of the Kingdom Age. The Kingdom of God on earth will be a blessing, but circumstances will sometimes be such that the blessing will need to be the rather forcible one of the "rod of iron," for the correction, discipline and instruction in righteousness of all the families of the earth. Since these conditions will obtain more or less throughout the thousand years of the Kingdom, and since, at the end of that age, there will be an uprising to be dealt with (Rev. 20: 6-9), our reason for preferring "Kingdom Age" to "Millennial Age" will be readily understood. After the Kingdom Age shall have accomplished its appointed work of putting all enemies under the feet of Christ (1 Cor. 15: 25), untold glories will follow, with nothing to mar or interrupt the blessedness and peace and perfection then to be enjoyed; but it will require the Kingdom rule and discipline to prepare the earth and all its families for those glories.

Like the preceding age, the Kingdom Age will play its part in exhibiting the "much diversified wisdom of God." Perhaps one of the most striking "diversities" then to be manifested will be the Kingdom of God in power on earth, having come to cause God's will to be done; whereas during the Gospel Age the divine appointment has been that the Kingdom should "suffer violence," and that those seeking to enter it must do so "through much tribulation"—Matt. 11: 12; Acts 14: 22.

Another "diversity" between the Kingdom Age and all its predecessors will be in the then restraining of the "Strong Man," who has been the "god of this world." His deceptions have been most potent in their opposition to the world-wide spread of the truth; or shall we rather put it another way, and say that because God has not, as yet, desired to enlighten the whole world, He has allowed Satan to remain at comparative liberty to deceive and to blind the world generally (2 Cor. 4: 4), annoying those who have been trying to walk in the ways of righteousness, and endeavouring to corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. 11: 3, 14.) This is part of the "much tribulation" through which we, of the Gospel Age, must "enter the Kingdom," and be proved worthy to become kings and priests. But when the time comes for these specially tried and tested ones to administer the divine blessing to the people generally, all of these pernicious activities of Satan, of his sympathisers, and of the systems of evil, inaugurated and fostered by him, must cease; "or

else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the Strong Man? And then he will spoil his house."—Matt. 12: 29; Isa. 35: 8-10; 11: 9.

Consideration of the details of the work appointed for the Kingdom Age, and of the difference between the blessing provided for the people under its rule, and the inheritance to which the saints of the Gospel Age are invited, will be presented in succeeding chapters, when more will, we trust, be seen of the "diversity."

## The Divine Weaving

"See the mystic Weaver sitting  
High in heaven—His loom below.  
Up and down the treadles go.  
Takes, for web, the world's dark ages,  
Takes, for woof, the kings and sages.  
Takes the nobles and their pages,  
Takes all stations and all stages.  
Thrones are bobbins in His shuttle:  
Armies make them scud and scuttle—  
Web into the woof must flow.  
Up and down the nations go:  
At the Weaver's *will* they go!

'Calmly see the mystic Weaver  
Throw His shuttle to and fro;  
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,  
Well the Weaver seems to know  
What each motion, and commotion,  
What each fusion, and confusion,  
In the grand result will show!

"Glorious wonder! What a weaving!  
To the *dull*, beyond believing.  
Such no fabled ages know.  
Only faith can see the mystery,  
How, along the aisles of history,  
Where the feet of sages go,  
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,  
Grand the mystic tapet lies!  
Soft and smooth, and ever spreading,  
As if made for angels' treading—  
Tufted circles touching ever:  
Every figure has its plaidings,  
Brighter forms and softer shadings.  
Each illumined—what a riddle!—  
From a cross that gems the middle.

"'Tis a saying—some reject it—  
That its light is all reflected;  
That the tapet's lines are given  
By a Sun that shines in heaven!  
'Tis believed—by all believing—  
That great God Himself is weaving,  
Bringing out the world's dark mystery,  
In the light of faith and history;  
And, as web and woof diminish,  
Comes the grand and glorious finish,  
When begin the Golden Ages,  
Long foretold by seers and sages."

—*Author Unknown.*

#### IV.

### Hope Beyond

**W**HEN the progenitors of our race were driven from the garden, the right to enjoy which they had forfeited by their sin, a brief word of promise was given them that some day the effects of this transgression should be undone. The word was that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head. (Gen. 3: 15.) True, this expressed little, but it must have been a source of consolation to the condemned ones, and to those of their posterity who believed in it. We have traced the amplified repetitions of this word of promise through the ages of the divine plan, and have noted the preparations being made for the fulfilment of the prediction. It has, we trust, been made plain that what many have misunderstood for complete fulfilment of the promise has been little more than preparation for fulfilment, though including the most glorious feature of the divine purpose, the calling, election and blessing of the joint heirs with Christ, the "seed" in whom all the families of earth are to be blessed. The fulfilment, as applicable to the most of the race, must now be considered, and we shall, for the present purpose, take our

standpoint at the close of the cataclysm (mentioned in Chapter II), by which the present social "earth" and ecclesiastical "heavens" shall be destroyed, and which will also mark the close of the Gospel Age, and the close of the "door" into its wonderful favours of becoming kings and priests and joint-heirs with Christ.

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire," is one of the first words to attract our attention. (Psalm 46: 9.) This will be brought to pass after the raging of the nations, the moving of the kingdoms and the melting of the "earth" spoken of in verse 6. The Almighty is interested in the cause of Peace, and He has appointed a time when wars shall cease, and Peace shall reign. If it could be realised that it is hopeless to expect universal Peace before the melting down of the present social and political arrangements, because the Lord has a great controversy with the nations, and is even now preparing to pour upon them His indignation and fierce anger, from what distress of mind many might be delivered, as they view the naval and military preparations in Christendom, and the world-wide social unrest. The instructed and well-informed Christian, fully assured that the trouble must come, and that it cannot be delayed, much less prevented, can rejoice in God as his refuge and strength, and his very present help in trouble. Such an one will not fear, though the "mountains" be carried into the midst of the "sea," and the "earth" be removed, for he will know what to hope for beyond the trouble, and will rejoice as he realises his redemption drawing near.—Luke 21: 28.

The purpose of making wars to cease is that the "pure language" may be turned to the nations (Zeph. 3: 9), and that, in the quietness of the calm which will follow the furious tempest, they may learn to know that Jehovah is God. "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the [new] 'earth.'" (Psalm 46: 10). "He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken."—Micah 4: 1-4.

It is to be understood from this that the effect of the Kingdom Age work will be not to prepare the people to be taken to heaven, but to prepare them to live in peace and happiness on the earth, made fit for the abode of a race of perfected human beings. Our ancestors, in the Garden, were perfect—"very good" in God's sight. When sin and its penalty entered, decay set in, and eventually the transgressors died, and all their race has followed them into death. But words of inspiration assure us (Acts 3: 20, 21) that "times of restitution" are due to begin at the second advent of Christ, and that these times have been "spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began." The above citation from Micah, which is found duplicated in Isa. 2: 1-4, is evidently one of God's utterances on this subject, through one of the holy prophets.

The word "restitution" helps us to understand the divine purpose in respect to the Kingdom Age. It means restoration, and suggests a return to the Edenic conditions of communion with God and perfection, as described in the prophecies already cited, and others which the student will readily find in his search through the writings of the holy prophets, as he seeks to verify the words of St. Peter, recorded in Acts 3: 21. It is most evident that "restitution," as applied to our race, cannot mean to go to heaven, because our progenitors, at their very best, were never heavenly beings (Psalm 8: 4-8), and to take the members of their race to heaven would not be restitution, or restoration; it would be something more than that—something more than God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets.

Consider Father Adam's estate before the entrance of sin. Perfect in organism, well supplied with all the necessities to maintain that perfection without aches or pains, exercising a benevolent rule over the lower creatures, all in peaceful and willing subjection to him, dwelling in a lovely garden, which contained none of the pests, vegetable, animal and climatic, which now make the existence of the farmer and orchardist a constant gamble, and enjoying the favour of his Creator—what more could he and his beautiful companion have desired? It was for them to develop their characters and talents in harmony with the Creator's just and beneficent laws. Had they done so, all would have remained well with them. Since they did not obey, all of these favours, including life itself, were taken from



them. But what a grand prospect is in store for the race according to the inspired prophecies! **RESTITUTION!**

Contemplate all the manifestations of talent you have heard of; the artists, musicians, orators, men of affairs, etc., etc. Remember that those who show preponderance of talent in one or two faculties are invariably deficient in some others of importance, so that the properly rounded out and fully developed man is not known amongst us. But try now to think of one in whom all the talents proper to humanity would be fully represented and developed; imagine such an one in Edenic environment, with the elements favourable; care free as to provision for his sustenance; with physical development perfect; with character established in righteousness; in the enjoyment of divine favour and communion; imagine the earth full of such beings: this is a picture of the effect of the "restitution" work of the Kingdom Age. What glories await the poor, "groaning creation!" What an honour it will be to the "Seed" to be permitted to bestow the grand blessing upon "whomsoever will!"—Rev. 22: 1, 17.

It must not be supposed that this blessing will forthwith, after the cessation of the time of trouble, be bestowed upon every individual on earth. Each one will need to be prepared, by instruction and training, as well as by recollections of former experiences of evil and its results, within himself and without, to appreciate the restitution blessing, and to strive by acceptance of Christ as His Saviour, and by obedience to Him, then ruler instead of Satan (Isa. 2: 2; Acts 3: 22), to develop that character which will be pleasing

to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Progress toward the goal will be in proportion to obedience, diligence and zeal.

One of the prophets illustrates the Kingdom Age and work by the picture of a road which he calls a "highway," "the way of holiness." (Isa. 35.) A "highway" is a road constructed for the convenience of travellers, and under proper conditions is well kept. (Attention is directed to the difference between the "narrow way" of the present age, found by comparatively few—Matt. 7: 14—and the "highway" of holiness of the Kingdom Age, specially constructed with a view to public travel. This is another of the "diversities.") The more zealous the traveller who begins this journey of faith and obedience, on the "highway," the sooner will he arrive at his destination; the more attentive and obedient the individual under the Kingdom, the sooner will he reach the end of the "way of holiness," which will be a character established in righteousness and obedience to God, and the sooner will he be granted all those blessings bound up in the prophecies of "restitution."

Let us now suppose that the Kingdom Age has so far advanced that the survivors of the time of trouble have all been enlightened, with a view to giving them the blessings of restitution, if they manifest faith and obedience. "To the Jew first," is the Divine order. (Rom. 2: 10.) In harmony with this thought is the expression of the Apostle in Acts 15: 13-18, where, after explaining the work of the Gospel Age to be the taking out of a people for God's Name, he says, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of

David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord." The throne of the Lord, once occupied by David, Solomon, and others, has been overturned until He come whose right it is (Ezek. 21: 25-27), and the subjects of the throne have been separated from Divine favour, for a time, until this people from among the Gentiles be taken out. (Rom. 11: 25.) This accomplished, the partial blindness will be turned away from Israel (Rom. 11: 26) in order that through them favour may be extended to the residue of men (survivors of the social, political, and ecclesiastical cataclysm now impending), and afterwards to others, even all the Gentiles over whom Jesus, by His death and resurrection, has become Lord.—Rom. 14: 9.

It is inevitable that some of the survivors of the trouble will think of friends and acquaintances, perhaps on this wise: "My brother John and I were standing together in such a place. He was accidentally killed, and I was not scratched. How he would enjoy being here! He was quite as good a man as I, and it is a thousand pities that he should be missing all these good things which we are now receiving." But is John to be forever deprived of the Kingdom Age blessings, because death overtook him a few months or years before the time for them to begin? Did not Jesus, our Lord, die for John as well as for his brother? Was not His death on the cross as much a manifestation of interest in and love for John, who died in the time of trouble, as for John's brother, who

survived the time of trouble? We are bound to admit that it was even so; and if we ask such questions about John, the same queries and answers would apply to John's father and mother, and their parents, also to theirs, and so right back to the earliest members of our race. It is written of Jesus, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) It is also written that God "will have all men to be saved [literally, protected or preserved], and to come unto an accurate knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2: 4.) Yet nothing is clearer than this, that the true Light has not enlightened every man that has come into the world, and this, that all men have not been brought to the accurate knowledge of the truth. Is the Divine Word discredited, and the Plan a failure? What is the position of these unenlightened ones? God loved them all; Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for everyone of them; on what ground must we suppose that they are excluded from the blessing which, according to the original promise, was to be for all the families of the earth? There is no ground in Scripture for such a supposition, which we believe would be unworthy the love and wisdom, as well as the justice and power of the Almighty; but there is much in the writings of the Holy Prophets pointing to something better. Let us examine the Scriptures which declare

**God's Gracious Provision  
for Those Who Have Died  
Without the Knowledge of the Truth.**

This is a most interesting question, and there is not a single reader of these lines but is deeply concerned

to know what God's Word may reveal to the humble seeker for truth on this subject. If God says nothing about it, it is a foregone conclusion that we must remain in ignorance; but if it has pleased Him to speak on this question, let us all attend reverently to His lightest Word, desiring to receive it with meekness, for the engrafted word, so received, is able to save our souls.—James 1: 21.

At the outset, it will be well for us to realise that the appointed channels, through which salvation flows, are faith and obedience. There is no other way. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must *believe* that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." "Being made perfect, Jesus became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey* Him." (Heb. 11: 6; 5: 9.) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5: 11, 12; John 3: 36.) All this is very clear and straightforward, effectually excluding the thought that those who have died without the knowledge of the truth are or are to be saved in or on account of their ignorance.

Nevertheless, some Christian friends, not knowing what else to say when asked about our present subject, declare it to be their belief that since those who have died without the knowledge of the truth did not know enough to reject Jesus the Saviour, they are sure to be

saved; "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" No doubt He will; yet they are zealously contributing their means to send some of their number to place the heathen in imminent peril; for as soon as the poor, ignorant heathen has been told something of Jesus he is no longer sure of being saved, as he was while ignorant; it is more than likely he will eventually be a rejecter of what he has been told. Think of the white men's lives and the black men's souls that would surely have been saved if India and Africa had been left in their ignorance! If those who die in ignorance are sure to be saved by reason of that ignorance the Missionary is a mistake, and zeal to preach the Gospel is the grand crime against humanity. And if God really loves all, He could not possibly give a better demonstration of it than by leaving us all in ignorance, for then we should all be saved, because we should not know enough to reject the Saviour! The idea of salvation through ignorance not only makes the love of God seem hatred, but it reduces His wisdom to something worse than foolishness; besides which, it is directly contrary to the Scriptures above cited, which show that there is only the one way of salvation, viz., through faith and obedience. Now it is manifest that one cannot exercise faith in a Saviour of Whom he is ignorant, nor obey a Lord whose commands he has never heard. We are therefore obliged to admit that those who have died without the knowledge of the Truth are not saved. To put it more plainly, they are lost. (2 Cor. 4: 3.) But, thanks be to God, even though lost, they are not hopelessly so.

If Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; if He gave Himself a ransom for all; if He is the propitiation for our sins—and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6; 1 John 2: 2); and if the benefits of that Sacrifice reach forward from the time of its offering, even to the present generation, why should we say that the multitudes who died in ignorance of God, in the forty centuries that preceded the offering of the Sacrifice, are altogether to be excluded from its benefits? If we were to say that, should we not be laying ourselves open to a charge of presumption, and of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think? We shall find that the Almighty is to be hindered by nothing, not even by death, from the glorious accomplishment of His purpose to have every human being enlightened by the true light, and brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth. He will bring them back from the grave, in order that they may learn to know Him, whom to know is life eternal.—Jer. 31: 15-17; John 17: 3.

“All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name.” Thus does the Psalmist (86: 9) foretell the privilege which shall be granted in the Kingdom Age to all nations of men, made of one blood, to dwell on the earth. (Acts 17: 26.) Those who died in ignorance of God are here particularly mentioned as glorifying His name; and the succeeding sentiments of David’s prayer are appropriate to them also. “Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth. For great is Thy mercy toward me; and Thou hast delivered my

soul from the lowest grave." (Marginal reading, Psalm 86: 10-13.) Were they already informed, they would not require to pray that the truth might be taught them, after being delivered from the grave.

The general statement of the Psalmist is fortified by many particular statements of the same import concerning various nations, some of them now extinct, which went into death unenlightened by the true Light. They could not have been so enlightened, because in their days the true Light had not begun to shine.

"Yet will I bring again the captivity [literally, "restore the prosperity"] of Moab, in the latter days, saith the Lord."—Jer. 48: 47.

"And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord."—Jer. 49: 6.

"But it shall come to pass in the latter days that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord."—Jer. 49: 39.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people, and Assyria, the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance."—Isa. 19: 24, 25.

### **Israel, Sodom and Samaria**

—Ezekiel 16: 44-63.—

A notable utterance through one of the holy prophets is found here. In verses 47, 48, the Lord declares the extraordinary wickedness of Israel in comparison with that of Sodom and Samaria. Many scriptures assure us that Israel was exceedingly hard-hearted and stiff-necked, a rebellious and gain-



saying people, to whom the Lord vainly held out His hands all the day. (Isa. 65: 2; Rom. 10: 21.) But the passage in Ezekiel puts it most forcibly, in that it states in verse 51 that Sodom and Samaria, though exceedingly wicked, were just by comparison with Israel. We are to bear in mind that Sodom here spoken of is that wicked people whom God destroyed in the days of Abraham. "Therefore I took them away, as I saw good." (Verse 50.) Sodom is one of the extinct peoples, and had been so for about fifteen centuries before this prophecy was uttered.

This is indeed a serious indictment of Israel. The reason for it is given in our Lord's words, recorded in Matt. 11: 20-24. The people of Israel had enjoyed many favours from the Lord; they had had the "oracles" committed to them (Rom. 3: 1, 2); eventually the Son of God came to them—his own—and was rejected as all divine messengers before him had been. These great privileges brought Israel into a position of greater responsibility than that of others having less light, and they constitute the explanation of Ezek. 16: 51. But it is most interesting to note that our Lord said, "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven [in the enjoyment of privileges of light and knowledge], shalt be brought down to hell; *for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.*" (Matt. 11: 23.) The thoughtful reader of these words of inspiration, from the lips of our blessed Saviour himself, will be impressed with the statement that Sodom might—yea,

it would—have been saved had its people seen the wonderful works of Jesus and heard his words of grace. One cannot but pause to wonder why, if He could have saved them, did not God send Jesus to Sodom? Why did He “see good” to take them all away? And what seems still more peculiar—why did God send Jesus to Capernaum, which did not repent, instead of sending him to Sodom, which would have repented, but was given no opportunity, such as Capernaum enjoyed? The systems of religious teaching which fail to recognise a Hope Beyond the grave, as well as that on this side, confessedly cannot deal satisfactorily with these questions.

Since man cannot help us, we must look to God; and blessed be his Name! the answer is easily discerned in Ezek. 16: 53, 55, “When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them.” “When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall *return to their former estate* [Does not this sound very much like “restitution”?], and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.” Now the difficulty is solved, because we see that, while God destroyed those Sodomites in the Patriarchal Age, He had in mind the “times of restitution” in which to deal with them with a view to their salvation. He has not overlooked them; much less does He intend to pass them by without giving them an opportunity for salvation, such as they have never enjoyed; He will, “in due time,” the restitution times,

beginning at our Lord's second advent (Acts 3: 21), bring them to that "accurate knowledge [Greek, *épignosis*] of the truth" concerning the one God and the one Mediator between God and men, vouchsafed to a comparatively small number during the Gospel Age, but to which all must some day come; He will surely cause them to be enlightened then with "the True Light"—1 Tim. 2: 4-6; John 1: 9.

Some have thought that in these statements of future blessings for Israel, Sodom and Samaria, the Almighty was speaking ironically, and that he has no intention of so blessing these peoples. We leave it for such to explain why it should be thought that God holds out false hopes of impossible salvation for those who never had such opportunities as some others enjoyed, but who would have repented had the opportunities been vouchsafed them. We have no sympathy with that distorted view of the love of God; and His own utterance through the prophet (Vss. 60-63) constitutes an effective rejoinder—"Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee . . . thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger . . . that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, *when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done*, saith the Lord God." Surely if God can find how to be pacified toward Israel, for all that she has done, it will not be nearly so difficult for him to be pacified toward Sodom and Samaria, which, by comparison with Israel, were considered "justified."

## **A Feast of Fat Things**

—Isa. 25: 6-9.—

This prophecy is one of those concerning the restitution times which begin with our Lord's second advent and the setting up of His Kingdom, as mentioned by Peter on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 3: 20, 21.) The opening words, "In this mountain," so indicate. As before mentioned, the Scriptures abound in symbolic language, all the products of nature and art being laid under contribution to assist in vivid portrayals of the divine purpose. But it must not be supposed that these symbolic expressions are used indiscriminately for fantastic effect. Such is not the case; they are used orderly and methodically; and with few exceptions a given object in nature or art, used symbolically, will bear one interpretation throughout the Scriptures. Attention has already been drawn to the interpretations attaching to "earth," "sea" and "heavens"; now "mountain" presents itself for consideration.

The Scriptures themselves present the interpretations of many of their symbols. "Mountain" is explained in Daniel 2: 34, 35, 44, 45. There the stone that smote the image is defined as representing the divine Kingdom, which shall be "set up" and shall "stand forever," and shall become "a great mountain and fill the whole earth." It may be taken from this that the symbolic "mountains" of the Bible stand for "kingdoms"; this is the generally recognised interpretation, and God's Kingdom is so represented as well as the kingdoms of men (Isa. 2: 2-4), the context indicating which is to be understood.

In Isa. 25: 6-9, there can be no doubt that God's Kingdom is meant; for "in this mountain [Kingdom] shall Jehovah of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things." "He will destroy in [1 Cor. 15: 22-26] this mountain [Kingdom] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. [That is to say] He will swallow up death in victory." This is the prospect which is held out for the families of the earth. Not that they can see it, at present, though they earnestly long for it; only those who have faith in the prophetic Word are able as yet with the eye of faith to "see afar off" the things not now visible to the eye of flesh. Even the dead are to be brought forth, for death is to be "swallowed up," and the beginning of this swallowing up of death must surely be that those in the tombs shall come forth.

This prophecy is briefly mentioned in 1 Cor. 15: 54, but the full scope of the Apostle's words has not, we fear, been generally apprehended. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." It is usually understood that the first part of this verse describes the fulfilment of "the saying that is written," but we believe that if it had been intended to be so understood, the Apostle would have composed his sentence differently in respect to the tense of one verb; thus, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then *will have been* brought to pass the saying that is written. There would be no room for question, had the sentence been so constructed. Neither is there room to doubt that, having composed

the sentence as he did, the inspired writer meant his readers to understand that the fulfilment of "the saying that is written" would follow the putting on of immortality by the called-out ones of the Gospel Age. "When . . . this mortal shall have put on immortality, then *shall be* brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." As we have already observed, the Gospel Age church of overcomers will be the "mountain" or Kingdom—the "Kingdom of priests," the "Seed of Abraham," in whom all nations shall be blessed. (Rev. 3: 21; 1 Pet. 2: 9; Gal. 3: 16, 29.) And the prophecy of Isa. 25: 6-9 describes the blessing that is to be given in the Kingdom Age.

"The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. 25: 8.) Under present and past evil conditions it has meant much of rebuke, and even of persecution, to confess oneself a child of God; but in the Kingdom Age conditions will be reversed. Then it will be esteemed an honour to be recognised as a member of the divine family, and the rebuke will be against those who will not submit themselves to the righteous rule of the Kingdom, and who will not accept the blessings of that "feast of fat things."

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isa. 25: 9.) So does this grand prophecy agree with those already referred to in describing the willingness of the people,

once they come to know God properly, and are freed from the deceptions of Satan which now blind them (2 Cor. 4: 4), to submit themselves to the divine will. Then God's Kingdom ("mountain") shall cause his will to be done on earth as in heaven. "We have waited for Him!" Ah, yes; even though the "groaning creation" has not known really what it was waiting for, nor all the good things which God has in store, we, by His favour, may understand that the "creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But it must be remembered that "the earnest [if ignorant] expectation of the creation waiteth for [cannot be realised until] the manifestation of the sons of God," in the glory of the Kingdom.—Rom. 8: 18-23; Col. 3: 4.

### **"Mine Evil Neighbours"**

—Jer. 12: 14-17.—

God's people, Israel, after they entered Palestine, were surrounded by nations of idolaters. They had for near neighbours such peoples as the Egyptians, Philistines, Arabians, Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians, Sidonians, Hittites, Edomites and Elamites. Some of these were blood relatives of the children of Israel, and the most of them were worshippers of Baal and Ashtaroth. These peoples exercised great influence over Israel, and often led them into idolatry, for which departure from the truth God at sundry times punished them severely. The prophecy now to be considered tells of God's purpose in respect to these evil, idolatrous peoples, who led his own chosen people astray.

"Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit: Behold, I will pluck them out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them." This has been done, and their countries are desolate to-day.

"And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land." This has not been done; but as surely as God will bring back Sodom, Samaria and Israel "to their former estate," so he will, in the same period, the "times of restitution," beginning with the setting up of His Kingdom on earth, bring these "evil neighbours" of Israel "again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land."

"And [then] it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people to swear by my name, the Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people." How kind and good the Lord is! These leaders astray shall be enlightened with the "True Light," and shall have the opportunity, if they will, of swearing allegiance to Him who is God indeed, instead of serving an imagination of their own minds; and if they will surrender, then they shall be built up in the midst of God's people; that is, they will be received by Him as His people—"whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people"—Isa. 19.

"But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord." What proportion of persistent, wilful, disobedient ones there will



ultimately be is not revealed to us. All things considered, we believe the number will be small. (Rev. 5: 13; Phil. 2: 9-11.) Nevertheless, whether few or many, all who persist in evil-doing, after coming fully under the enlightenment of the Kingdom Age, with all its influences and helps to reformation of life, will be "utterly plucked up and destroyed" "from among the people" "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power!"\* —Jer. 12: 17; Acts 3: 23; 2 Thes. 1: 9.

### **Whosoever Will "**

—Rev. 22:17.—

In chapters II. and III. we endeavoured to set forth the Bible teaching, that God has been choosing, or electing, during the Patriarchal, Jewish and Gospel Ages, certain persons to be blessed with light and the opportunity for salvation in advance of the time when these

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\* The teaching of "eternal torment" is not expressed in the Scriptures, though it has obtained a surprising degree of influence in Christendom. Its effect at the first was to bring members into the churches; its present effect, though not much preached just now, is to alienate sympathy from the churches. But many preachers, and lay members, who do not believe in it, do not, in a straightforward manner, repudiate it. The result of this lack of uprightness is the alienation of sympathy from the Bible, because the people are allowed to remain under the impression that "eternal torment" is there taught, and thus many infidels are made. If eternal torment be true, those who believe it are not nearly active enough in their efforts to save souls from it; if it be untrue, those who are so persuaded should esteem it a privilege to do what in them lies to remove the misapprehension from the popular mind, and the foul blot from the Divine Name. Write us for publications on this subject, explaining parables and dark sayings.

blessings will be universally supplied, and through whom the blessings will ultimately flow to all the families of the earth. He has not chosen all, only a few; He has not even enlightened all, so that up to the present time there has been no circumstance in God's dealings that could possibly be considered as corroborating the thought, expressed by many, that God has been willing to receive anyone, and would like to receive everyone if He could only persuade them to come. The fact, already referred to, that the messengers of truth, at the beginning of the Gospel Age, were providentially hindered from going in certain directions, should be good evidence that the Lord's plan had not then (nor has it since) reached the "whosoever will" stage. Reference to the beautiful picture of Rev. 22: 1, 17 shows that it belongs to the Kingdom Age; and the right dividing of the Word of Truth, thus indicated by a recognition of the "diversities," will keep us from that confusion which must overtake those who preach "whosoever will," when they should preach "whom God wills."—Rom. 9: 16.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." "And the Spirit and the Bride say Come; And let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The fact that this water of life will proceed from the throne and that the "Bride" will join with the Spirit in inviting all to take it is clear evidence that this is a prophecy of the Kingdom Age. As yet, the Kingdom has not been established on the earth; and there is no "Bride," because

the "marriage of the Lamb" has not taken place. The church is now regarded as the "espoused virgin," and will be the Bride when joined to the Lord in His Kingdom glory, to sit with Him in His throne. After this "marriage," and the establishment of the Kingdom in power and great glory, the work in which the Church has been called to share will begin. All the families of the earth will be blessed in the manner described in this beautiful prophecy, by being invited to come and take the water of life, which will then be flowing freely. That will be the age of greatly extended missionary activity, because the time will then have arrived in which the Lord will send forth his Word to enlighten and convert all the nations. Then it will "prosper" to that end, and will accomplish that which God pleases. We have already seen that it could not in present and past ages prosper in fully enlightening the world, because God's time for that had not arrived. In the Kingdom Age all this will be different. The time will be right; the deceptions will be removed; the power will be sufficient; the Word will prosper in its mission; "whosoever will" may come.

Let us realise, by seeing the picture complete, the grand comprehensiveness of the divine purpose. In Rev. 20: 11, 12, we have a view of the same throne, described as "great" and "white"—powerful and just. The "earth" and the "heaven," social and ecclesiastical and spiritual arrangements of the present order of things, will flee away from Him who will sit on that throne, and they will be replaced by new "heavens" and new "earth" wherein dwelleth righteousness, for which we look, according to God's promise. (2 Peter 3:13.)

Under those blessed influences, the present evil world and its ruler put away, the vision continues—"And I saw the DEAD, small and great, stand before the throne [reading of oldest MSS. and Revised Version]." Surely, if they stand before the throne they must see the River, they must hear the Invitation, and must have the Opportunity to drink and live. How grand are God's purposes, how much higher His thoughts and ways than our thoughts and ways! Must we not acknowledge that He has not forgotten His promise, to bless all the families of the earth, but has made ample provision for the accomplishment of all his loving designs?

"O the Depth of the Riches  
Both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable are His Judgments,  
And His ways pass finding out!  
For who hath known the mind of the Lord,  
Or who hath been His Counsellor?  
Or hath first given to Him,  
And it shall be Recompensed unto Him again?  
For of Him,  
And through Him,  
And to Him,  
Are All Things:  
To Whom be Glory for Ever."

Amen.

## V.

### Concerning Objections to "Hope Beyond"

"God forbid that I should limit the time of acquiring faith to the present life! In the depths of the divine mercy there may be opportunity to win it in the future state."—**MARTIN LUTHER**, in a letter to Hansen von Rechenberg, 1522.

**M**ANY have been the sore, bereaved hearts comforted and the perplexed minds set at rest by the Scripture teaching that there is hope beyond the grave for those not enlightened before death. God, Who sets the standard of enlightenment, must also be the judge of each individual case; none of us is competent for that. And we are fully persuaded that He will not overlook the smallest circumstance that should be considered, and that He will deal righteously and mercifully with each individual.

But, notwithstanding the clearness of the Scriptures on this subject, difficulties present themselves to some minds. The objections may be classified as moral, physical and Scriptural, and in this order we shall examine them, trusting to be able to show that they have no real foundation.

## Moral Objections

"It is too good to be true." As a matter of fact, the more clearly a teaching reflects divine love, justice and wisdom, the more reason there is to consider it true; and nothing is too good to be true. Nothing is too kind for God to plan or too good for Him to bring to pass. Nevertheless, one can well sympathise with the hesitating state of this inquirer's mind on realising the Scripture truth to be so different from human tradition, and can give the assurance that faith and trust in God, with continued prayerful searching of the Scriptures, "to see whether these things be so," will presently make quite clear that the promise to bless "all the families of the earth" is not "too good to be true."

This may be regarded as an indication of the surprised state of the mind of the inquirer, rather than as an objection to the teaching of a blessing to come.

"Is it not *unfair* to give to some an opportunity for salvation in a future life under favourable conditions, when now to obtain salvation it is necessary to endure 'a great fight of afflictions,' denying one's self every indulgence, for Christ's sake? And would not such a teaching induce in those who accept it carelessness toward present responsibility?"

Were the rewards of present self-denial and future obedience of precisely the same value, it would seem very strange that the conditions of salvation now prevailing, as represented in the "narrow way," should be so much more difficult than those of the future, as represented in the "highway of holiness." But the reward of present faithfulness is to be so much superior

to the "restitution" to be offered in the Kingdom Age, that instead of deeming the present severe conditions too rigorous, one will be inclined to think of them as only "a light affliction," which is but for a moment. It has already been mentioned that the faithful of the Gospel Age are to be blessers of the nations in the Kingdom Age. This is only one item of the superior value of the reward of present faithfulness; more will be mentioned in the next chapter.—Matt. 7: 14; Isa. 35: 8-10; 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18.

While the terms of salvation will be more easily complied with in the next age than is possible now, because deceptive influences now active will then be restrained, it is by no means correct to suppose that the conditions then will be perfectly easy. Obedience in all things will then be required. (Acts 3: 22, 23.) This will necessitate self-surrender, which will be found exceedingly difficult by the proud and haughty and self-indulgent.

Experience covering a number of years of acquaintance with and preaching of this gracious doctrine does not at all confirm the thought of the questioner that acceptance of it tends to carelessness toward present responsibilities. Having had the privilege of acquaintance with many in all lands who have accepted this teaching as Scriptural, the writer can say that his observation supports the thought that this is a very valuable element of the truth which *sanctifies*. (John 17: 17.) This realisation of the greatness of divine love, of its "breadth and length and depth and height," received into a good and honest heart, will be a power to transform that heart into the likeness of the One it

is contemplating, so that the principle will be more and yet more appreciated, "we love, because He first loved us."—Eph. 3: 17-19; 2 Cor. 3: 18; 1 John 4: 19.

On the other hand, it must be patent to all that if God's saints are to be sanctified by the truth, it is useless to expect error to have that effect. Therefore we invite careful consideration of the following queries: Has the preaching of "eternal torment" for those who die unconverted reformed the world? This has been preached for fifteen centuries with considerable vigour; is Christendom, which has stood for this teaching all this time, waxing or waning? Has eternal torment preaching caused men to think less of money and more of morals? Has it caused women to think less of society and more of salvation? Has it purged Christendom of worldliness? Every one is perfectly well aware that only a negative will answer these questions. And yet, some have persisted in the delusion that to preach a "real, old-fashioned Gospel sermon" means to give the unconverted hearers vivid portrayals of the flames which await them. Much depends on how "old-fashioned" the preacher wishes to be. If a century, or two or three, be "old-fashioned" enough, no doubt a good deal of "torment" was preached in those days. But if one go back to apostolic times, he may find that the great Paul took the elders of the Ephesian congregation to record that he was pure from the blood of all men; "for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20: 27.) Yet the Pauline epistles, constituting the major portion of the New Testament, may be searched in vain for the teaching of eternal torment. And if one go back about fifty



years earlier than Paul's time he comes to some shepherds, watching their flocks by night. To them appears an angel, who soothes their fears by preaching to them a Gospel sermon, "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings [this is the meaning of the word "gospel"] of great joy, which shall be to all people." It does not appear that the angel was filled with forebodings, lest the declaration of such a message should make the shepherds careless, and that he sought to improve on it after the modern manner, by changing "good tidings" to bad tidings, and "great joy" to eternal misery.

But as though to set at rest all doubt as to what a gospel sermon really is, the Scriptures give us the record of a very short one preached by the Almighty Himself, some four thousand years ago—"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith [observe, not through ignorance] preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" (Gal. 3: 8.) This is the Gospel, on the Highest Authority. Let us all take notice. If our preaching has been different from this; if we have fallen short of declaring all that God implied in His Gospel Sermon; we ought to revise our preaching forthwith, and follow the model set for us from above.

Strange as it may seem, it is yet true, that this, the real Gospel, has never had popular favour, from the time God preached it till now. So our inquirer need have no fears that the preaching of it will make the

world careless of present responsibilities. The world generally, and worldly Christians, as a rule, are not interested in topics of this kind, therefore they do not trouble themselves about them. The *goodness* of God is the very thing they cannot comprehend, as the Apostle explains, "the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them."—2 Cor. 4: 4.

Although God has not been dealing with the whole world in any individual sense, He is nevertheless causing a record to be made of everything in the life of each individual, and is by no means ignoring their present conditions. Not that a "recording angel" writes up everything for and against each person in a heavenly ledger; that would be both tedious and ineffective. The record is made automatically on the character of each person; and every thought, word and deed bears its little part in the formation of that combination of habits which constitutes character. This is effective; everything, good and bad, small and great, is recorded, and the elevating or degrading effect cannot be gainsaid. Accordingly, when in the Kingdom Age men are being dealt with individually, those who have led evil lives will have difficulties in proportion, under the strict laws that will then be in force and enforced, while one who has tried to do the right thing, even in his worldly way, will be then in a correspondingly better position to appreciate the blessings of the Kingdom and to profit by them.—Jer. 12: 14-17; Matt. 10: 42; 23: 29-33.

### Physical Objection

"Is the Restitution feasible? Would the earth be able to accommodate and sustain the human race if all who have ever lived were brought back?"

We are confident that the plan is perfectly feasible, also that there will be an abundance of room and sustenance on the earth for the restored families, because it is God's plan, and He makes no mistakes in His arrangements. He it was who at the first commanded our progenitors to "multiply and fill\* the earth." (Gen. 1: 28.) He knows perfectly the capacity of the earth. Bearing in mind that at the beginning development was much less rapid than now, so that, before the flood, about sixty-five to eighty years seems to have been the marriageable age; that the flood reduced the population of the earth to eight persons, and that wars, famines and pestilences have from time to time removed large numbers of productive individuals, we believe that twenty-seven thousand millions (27,000,000,000) would not be far from the right figure as the total number of descendants of Father Adam and Mother Eve. The state of Victoria, in the Commonwealth of Australia, would be able to allow twenty square feet of surface to each individual of these thousands of millions four times multiplied. Hence there need be no anxiety about breathing room for the multitudes who are to return. Moreover, it may

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\*The word "replenish" in the Authorised Version is very misleading indeed, and has been the basis for theories of pre-Adamic races in the earth—one or many, according to each person's fancy. "Strong's Exhaustive Concordance" defines the original, "mala," as meaning simply "to fill," with no thought of re-filling.

yet happen that more continents will rise out of the waste of waters which now covers about two-thirds of the earth's surface. In addition to this, those parts of the earth which are not now comfortably habitable, such as the tropics and the poles, will become so, as it is well known that the polar regions formerly were, and thus will be supplied still more space for habitation and tillage. And when the wilderness shall be made to blossom as the rose, we need not anticipate difficulties over the feeding of the multitudes in a very natural way; though if it were necessary, He who sustained the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness, and fed five thousand on a few loaves and fishes, could doubtless furnish miraculous supplies to all eternity.

### **Scriptural Objections**

#### **"Now is the Accepted Time"**

"We are told in 2 Cor. 6: 2 that 'now is the accepted time,' and 'now is the day of salvation.' Does not this antagonise the teaching of salvation at a future day?"

These words of the Apostle are a comment on a quotation from the Old Testament—given in the first part of the verse, following the words, "for he saith." The occasion for making this quotation was to encourage the saints in connection with their privilege of ambassadorship for Christ. (2 Cor. 5: 18-6: 1.) To get the proper understanding of the matter, the Old Testament prophecy must be referred to. (Isa. 49: 6-10.) Verses 6 and 7 are readily recognised as addressed by Jehovah to His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the first part of verse 8 we find the words quoted by the Apostle—"In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of

salvation have I helped thee." His comment on these words—"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation"—has the effect of making them applicable to the entire Gospel Age Church. And if the first part of Isa. 49: 8 is to apply to the Gospel Age Church, the same must be true of verses 6 and 7. That is to say, this splendid prophecy of encouragement is intended to apply not only to Jesus, but also to the members of the Body over which He is the Head. The prophecy does not say that these, who are being heard and helped in the Gospel Age, the acceptable time and day of salvation, are the only ones who shall be saved, nor that the Gospel Age is the only appointed day of salvation. On the contrary, it points to another day of salvation, agreeing with the prophecy of Isa. 25: 6-9 concerning the Kingdom Age. He says, "I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, go forth; to them that are in darkness, show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them." (Isa. 49: 8-10.) It seems evident from this that the prophecy to which the Apostle refers, and on which he makes the brief comment used as a basis of objection to the teaching of future blessings for the families of the earth, is speaking not only of special blessings for some during a limited time, the Gospel Age, but also of general blessings to be bestowed through this specially-blessed class during the Kingdom Age.

## **"The Resurrection of Damnation"**

"In John 5: 28, 29 we read, that 'the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.' How shall this be understood in harmony with the texts that teach the enlightenment and blessing of all?"

The first part of the text presents no difficulty, as it is quite readily understood that those who in ages past "obtained a good report through faith," and those who have made "their calling and election sure" during the Gospel Age, should be raised at once to the everlasting inheritances which have been provided for them. The difficulty in the phrase "resurrection of damnation" exists only on account of a mistranslation, recognised and corrected by all modern versions. When the phrase is accurately translated, "resurrection of judgment," the difficulties are immediately resolved, and this text is recognised as being in strict harmony with all those before cited. The Greek word translated "damnation" in verse 29 is correctly rendered "judgment" in verse 30, where also the teaching is expressed that the wicked dead are to be raised to the judgment, and not, as erroneously supposed by some, that the judgment is already passed upon them and their cases decided. Concerning the judgment to which those that have done evil are to be raised, our Lord said, "*As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just.*" This agrees with Rev. 20: 12 and 21: 12—"The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,

*according to their works*"; "every man according as his work shall be," after the second advent of Him who at His first advent was Redeemer, and at His second advent is to be King and Judge.

Consideration of the judges of ancient Israel will be helpful at this juncture, assisting us to apprehend that our Lord, in His capacity of Judge in the Kingdom Age, will not be, as it were, President of the Grand Criminal Assize of the Universe, but will be in the first place a Deliverer and after that a Ruler and Instructor in righteousness. The typical judges of Israel first delivered the people from their oppressors, then ruled over them to bless and instruct. (Judges 2: 11-19; 3: 7-11, 14, 15, 30, 31, etc.) So will the antitypical Judge, our Lord Jesus, and with Him His saints (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3), deliver the people from the oppressions and evil conditions of the present order of things, and from the prison house of the tomb, and will subsequently rule over them to bless and instruct them in the ways of righteousness, punishing those who will not obey Him, even with the Second Death, if they persist in disobedience after full enlightenment. The blessings of that day are foretold in Isa. 32: 1-8; in verses 9-14 the evil conditions of the present are described, and in verses 15-20 the peaceable effects of the future rule of righteousness are again mentioned.

That peculiar, though very prevalent, idea, that the Day of Judgment is to be a period of twenty-four hours, has done much to make the divine plan seem unreasonable to the minds of thinking people, and rightly so; for it is a most unreasonable view to take of that solemn occasion, and really makes the

sublime ridiculous. If, for convenience, we estimate the whole number to be judged in that one day at 24,000,000,000, we find that each hour would require to dispose of 1,000,000,000 cases. In each minute of that day, 16,666,666 eternal destinies would need to be decided; in each second, 277,777. Allowing but 18 inches of space to each person, a speed of nearly 80 miles per second, or nearly 288,000 miles per hour, would be required to pass the 24,000,000,000 before a given point in single file, in a period of twenty-four hours. If the total number of cases to be decided be estimated at 48,000,000,000, then all figures would require to be doubled and the absurdity of the idea would increase proportionately.

But when we remember that the Kingdom Age of a thousand years is appointed for the reign of the great Judge (Rev. 20: 4), we find no difficulty in comprehending that He will be able to give full and proper attention to each case, by taking note of their then attitude towards Himself and His rule of righteousness—which attitude will be to a considerable extent determined by their sympathy or lack of sympathy, after enlightenment, with the former evil conditions—"to give every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. 21: 12.

### **"After Death the Judgment"**

"In Heb. 9: 27, we read, that 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' Does not this seem to indicate that the destiny of each person is fixed at death, thus conflicting with the teaching of opportunities for reformation during the Kingdom Age?"



It is assumed by this objector that "it is appointed unto men once to die," refers to the statements elsewhere in the New Testament that "by a man came death," and "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men." (1 Cor. 15: 21; Rom. 5: 12.) And if the words stood by themselves, there could be no serious objection raised to such application of them. But, when considered in connection with the context, beginning at verse 24, it is at once made plain that a different application is intended. A comparison between the typical sacrifices and that of our Lord is here made. "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, . . . but into heaven itself; . . . nor yet that He should offer Himself often, . . . but now once." The Jewish high priest entered often into the tabernacle with the blood of others; manifestly he could not have been slain and have carried his own blood to the typical mercy-seat, therefore animal victims were provided; and the picture was thus made of the sacrifice of Christ, the high priest dying representatively in the victim. The high priest was closely scrutinised while performing these ceremonies, and had he failed in any point, he would have died, and could not subsequently have come forth to bless the people. And as these high-priest-men were appointed to die representatively and after this the judgment came as to whether or not their sacrifices had been satisfactorily offered, they doing this every year, the typical cleansing of the Jews thus effected availing only for a year; similarly Christ was offered, not every year, but now once for all, to bear the sins of many—not those of the

Jews merely, nor those of the Church merely, but those of all mankind. His sacrifice was satisfactory to Divine Justice, as was indicated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; therefore, just as the typical high priest, having passed the scrutiny or judgment, came forth to bless the people, so Christ in due time appears the second time without a sin-offering, unto the salvation of those purchased by His precious sacrifice. And just as the sacrifices of the typical day of atonement brought a blessing to all the nation for whom offered, so must we believe that the better sacrifice results in a blessing to all for whom it was offered.—Lev. 9: 22-24; Numbers 6: 22-27; John 3: 16; 1 John 2: 1, 2; Acts 3: 26; Rom. 8: 19-22; Heb. 9: 14; 10: 10-18.

**“Where Shall the Ungodly  
and the Sinner Appear?”**

“In 1 Pet. 4: 17, 18, we read, ‘For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely [Alford translates, “with difficulty”] be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Does not this effectually discountenance all hope for the future blessing of those who have not been truly enlightened in the present life?”

Again is the inquirer referred to the context. Beginning with verse 12, it is seen that the general topic is the suffering endured by Christians. “Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings.” “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye.” “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be

ashamed." These are the "righteous" mentioned in verse 18; the "ungodly" and "sinners" are such as are described in verse 15, who, though in "the house of God," "the household of faith," do not appreciate their privileges of righteous conduct, and suffering for righteousness' sake (1 Peter 2: 19-23), but who "suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." The "righteous" are not easily saved to their promised glory, honour and immortality; through much tribulation they must enter the Kingdom. (Rom. 2: 7; Acts 14: 22.) Where, then, could the others appear in this Kingdom? Not at all. They are rejected as unfit.—Heb. 10: 38, 39; 2 Pet. 2: 20; Luke 9: 62.

But even were one to go so far as to say (which such Scriptures as Luke 12: 47, 48 would not permit) that all of this "ungodly and sinner" class, of every degree of remissness, are forever excluded from participation in the favours of God on any plane, it is still to be remembered that the Apostle Peter is writing of a very limited number, "the house of God," and that those outside the "household of faith" are not considered in this connection. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." It began at the beginning of the Gospel Age, and has continued ever since, in the trials, testings and disciplinings of those who have been candidates for joint heirship with Christ. In this sense, those of this "household" have all been before the judgment seat of Christ, ever since entering the Christian life. (Rom. 14: 10.) But the world generally has not as yet been thus on probation. Their time is coming, in the Kingdom Age, as testified by the many

scriptures already cited, and there is nothing in 1 Peter 4: 17, 18 contradictory to the assurances of other portions, including Acts 3: 19-26, by the same Apostle.

### **"Condemned Already"**

"In John 3: 18, we read, 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.' Does not this seriously conflict with the teaching of a future blessing for present-day unbelievers?"

The answer to this question is best furnished by the 19th verse: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." In thus stating the reason for the condemnation of the unbeliever, our Saviour showed that the ultimate condemnation will not come upon any such unless he persist in his unbelief notwithstanding enlightenment. How else can verse 19 be understood? How can one love darkness *rather* than light, unless he know something about both? We are to regard this passage as a confirmation of all we have been considering about the love and kindness of the Lord, and the abundance of His provision for the enlightenment of every member of our race. "That was the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) He has not yet enlightened all, but He will do so "in due time," and then all those who have known darkness, and little or no light, shall be tested to determine which they prefer. If they love the light, they shall have a reward; if they persist in

loving the darkness, they must be condemned, and their end must be destruction. Well will it be for us, already enlightened to some extent, if we take to heart the lesson of this passage, that light brings the responsibility of choice between itself and the darkness. This responsibility cannot be shirked; whoso seeks to evade it proves by his effort that he loves the darkness rather than the light, and thereby places himself in danger of heavy condemnation.

**"As Many as Have Sinned  
Without Law Shall Also  
Perish Without Law"**

"In Rom. 2: 12 we read as above quoted. Does not this show that the ignorant heathen shall be finally judged without reference to their knowledge of God's Plan, but solely with respect to their attitude toward the promptings of their unenlightened consciences?"

No; these words of the Apostle do not so teach, when considered in connection with their context. The passage is a long one, and its beginning may be found at least as far back as Rom. 1: 18, 19. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest to them [margin]; for God hath showed it unto them." Words like these do not refer to the ignorant, but to those favoured with some knowledge of the truth. The thought is repeated in Rom. 2: 8. "Unto them that are contentious, and *do not obey the truth*, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first and also of the

Gentile." Here again we find reference to severe dealings with sinners against light, but nothing at all concerning final judgment being administered before enlightenment has been granted. The Jew, having been under the Law, was now being brought into contact with the superior light of the Gospel; the Gentile, who had not been under the Law, was also being enlightened by the Gospel. The Law could not save the Jew, nor the little light of conscience the Gentile; but the Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greck." (Rom. 1: 16.) But if any one enlightened by the Gospel (whether a Jew formerly under the Law, or a Gentile never under the Law), is contentious, and does not obey the truth, he is preparing serious retribution for himself. These are the sinners mentioned in Rom. 2: 12.

**"They are Dead,  
They Shall Not Live"**

All the supposed scriptural objections to "Hope Beyond" are based on what seems a misunderstanding of a few texts, with apparently no effort to see how these and all others may be harmonised. If the Bible be self-contradictory, it is unreliable; and the effect of objections which merely set some passages of Scripture in opposition to others, practically saying "I prefer these to those," is to encourage the spirit of scepticism, already sufficiently in the world. Does not the Bible Student who pursues such a course really convict himself of lack of reverence for the Divine Word? The following objection to the resurrection and

blessing of all the families of the earth is based on a group of much misunderstood texts.

"Can you explain the following, which seems to show that some will not be raised?—Isaiah 26: 13, 14; Jeremiah 51: 39, 57; Proverbs 21: 16; Psalm 49: 12, 20. Does not Ephesians 4: 17, 18 show that ignorance alienates from God?

"When quoting 1 Cor. 15: 22, is it not to be considered that although we are all in Adam by descent, a way is prescribed whereby we may come into Christ, or put on Christ; hence not all are in Christ. Although what Paul writes to Timothy about Christ dying for all is also true, will the death benefit those who do not come into Christ in the way laid down?"

Experience shows that in teaching the raising of all (both just and unjust), we are not giving out something that is pleasing to the "flesh." The "flesh" prefers to believe that it has a soul that lives the more happily while the body is dead, which of course makes the resurrection not only unnecessary but a great inconvenience; so that this doctrine is no more acceptable now than it was in the days of the apostles, who preached Jesus and the resurrection.

So far as this questioner has expressed himself on 1 Cor. 15: 22, we are quite in harmony, for we also believe that no one will be made *alive*, and be allowed to live forever, except he have come into Christ in the way of faith and obedience appointed thereto. The difference between us in this connection would be more in that we understand the Scriptures to teach that all will have an opportunity to come into Christ,

and that none will be destroyed in the Second Death without having had this opportunity, and that if some have died on account of Adamic death before the "day" appointed in God's Plan for the bringing of the blessing to all the families of the earth by the Seed of Abraham (Christ and his joint-heirs), and without the enlightenment that God purposes to give to every man (John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4), such will be waked up out of their sleep, will be enlightened, and will be confronted with the responsibility of choosing either to obey the Great Prophet and live, or to disobey Him and perish; whereas the questioner's idea seems to be that those who have died in ignorance of the "Only Name," as most of our race have done, will never hear about Him and His love for them, which would be contrary to the above Scriptures and many others.

If we understand our questioner's thought correctly, it would represent the Lord as having given a price sufficient to redeem the whole race, from Adam onward, yet receiving an opportunity to bless only about one in a hundred of all those for whom he gave a sufficient price. (1 John 2: 2.) No one would be well pleased with the result of a transaction which would return him £1 for every £100; is it any more reasonable to suppose that the Redeemer of the world should be satisfied with the opportunity to bless only one soul, when by the investment of his entire capital (Himself—1 Tim. 2: 6) he purchased with a price the right to bless a hundred? Would not such an outcome of the Great



Transaction be a reflection on the Justice of the Almighty, to whom the price was paid? Could the first portion of Isaiah 53: 11 in such a case be said to be accomplished?

It is possible that some now dead will never be raised, namely, those who have wilfully sinned against the sufficient enlightenment of the truth. (Heb. 6: 4-6; 10: 26-31.) And in so far as these conditions are met by those described in the references cited from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Proverbs and Psalms, we are bound to believe that they belong to the class that will not be raised. But there were not many in Old Testament times (if there were one) that could have fulfilled the conditions mentioned in Hebrews; and even since Pentecost the greater part of the world has been left in so much darkness that for them to have come under these conditions has been impossible. A certain amount of enlightenment is necessary, and this has been withheld from the world as a whole.

Verse 14 of Psalm 49 seems to show that it is necessary to seek some interpretation of verse 19 that will not cause the inspired writer to be saying that they shall never be brought back from the dead; for how could the upright have dominion over non-existent persons? Does not the Psalmist rather seem to be saying that those who persist in the foolish ways of the world shall be allowed to go on so, without being enlightened concerning a better way? They shall never see light before death overtakes them; but who can say that they will not see a very great light when the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning? This is harmonious with all the rest of the

Psalm, and with other Scriptures already mentioned; and should it not be the aim of every Bible student so to interpret the Word that all the parts harmonise, and no plain statement need be ignored?

Proverbs 21: 16 seems to express exactly the sentiment elaborated in Hebrews. This is telling about the man who wanders out of the way of understanding. It refers, therefore, to one who has been enlightened; and whatever it may say about him, it teaches nothing concerning those who have never been in the way of understanding, which has been the condition of most of the race.

In Jeremiah 51: 39, 57, the word "perpetual" is translated from the Hebrew word "olam," which signifies "lasting," or "enduring," and the length of the duration must be determined by the context, or by other Scriptures. That it comes short of meaning "endless," is readily seen by reference to the Scriptures, and it is instructive to place in parallel columns some texts which describe certain things as "olam," with other texts which tell of the doing away of the same.

#### "OLAM."

Exodus 29: 9.

Here the Aaronic priesthood is "olam."

Jeremiah 25: 9.

Here the seventy years of desolation are "olam."

Jeremiah 51: 39, 57.

The

"olam"

sleepers.

#### "OLAM" ENDED.

Hebrews 7: 12.

Here the Aaronic priesthood is supplanted by the Melchisedec order.

Jeremiah 32: 15.

Here the "olam" desolation is ended.

Isaiah 25:7; Ezekiel 37: 12-14 with 16: 53, 55, 61-63; Jeremiah 12: 14-17; 48: 47; 49: 6, 39; Psalm 86: 9; Phil. 2: 10; Acts 3: 24. "Olam" sleepers awake.

The "perpetual" sleep of the Babylonian desolators of Palestine has not been interrupted as yet, but it is to be, for "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." That is to say, "He will swallow up death in victory." They have slept long; but they shall be waked up in due time, and with the Assyrians, Egyptians and Israelites (Isaiah 19: 24, 25), with the Moabites, Ammonites and Elamites (Jeremiah 48: 47; 49: 6, 39), with the Samaritans and with the Sodomites (Ezekiel 16: 53, 55) and all the *nations* whom God has made, then shall come and worship (Psalm 86: 9), and with all the *families* of the earth shall receive the blessing through the promised "Seed," which is the Christ. (Galatians 3: 8, 16, 29.) Yea, at the name of Jesus every *individual* knee shall bow, whether it be on the earth or under the earth; and surely those under the earth will need to hear His voice and come forth, and will need instruction before they can acknowledge the Lord Jesus, and confess to the glory of God the Father that He is the Lord. There is nothing in Jeremiah 51: 39, 57 that conflicts with the grand testimony of all God's holy prophets, Jeremiah included, concerning the "Times of Restitution of All Things."

The "lords" in Isaiah 26: 13, 14 we understand to mean the various nations and systems that have oppressed Israel. Some of these are dead, and the remainder will die, and as institutions they shall not rise; but this in no way antagonises the thought that the individuals composing these nations shall be

brought back from death. How else shall this passage be understood in harmony with the Scriptures above cited?

Without doubt, ignorance has alienated and does alienate (as we are told in Ephesians 4: 17, 18) men from the life of God; but when, under the Kingdom, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, all will learn to know God, and many, we trust, will gladly obey him, and will no longer be alienated, but will become members of His family. Indeed, the same Apostle assures us that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, and shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Romans 8: 21.

### **“The Whole Land Shall be Desolate”**

“In Jeremiah 4: 23-27 and Isaiah 34: 8-10 we read, ‘I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; . . . I beheld, and, lo, there was no man; . . . for thus hath the Lord said, the whole land shall be desolate;’ and ‘the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof into burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.’ As this in Isaiah is associated with ‘the day of the Lord’s vengeance and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion,’ would it not be contradictory to the teaching of hope for salvation of the world during the Kingdom Age?”

# Diagram of the best 50 Greek Manuscripts of the New Testament now available.

Names of Manuscripts	Century	Where Deposited	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	Romans	1 Cor.	2 Cor.	Galatians	Eph.	Phil.	Col.	1 Thess.	2 Thess.	1 Tim.	2 Tim.	Titus	Philem.	Hebrews	1 Peter	2 Peter	1 John	2 John	3 John	James	Jude	Revelation
Sinaiticus . . . . .	IV	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Alexandrinus . . . . .	V	London . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Vaticanus 1209 . . . . .	IV	Rome . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Ephræmi rescriptus . . . . .	V	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bezae Cantabrigiensis . . . . .	VI	Cambridge . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Claromontanus . . . . .	IX	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Basilienus . . . . .	VIII	Basle . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Laudianus . . . . .	VI	Oxford . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sangermanensis . . . . .	IX	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Boreelianus . . . . .	IX	Utrecht . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Augiensis . . . . .	IX	Cambridge . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cosilianus . . . . .	VII	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Harleianus . . . . .	IX-X	London . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Petropolitanus . . . . .	VII	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Boernerianus . . . . .	IX	Dresden . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Seidelii . . . . .	IX	Hamburg . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mutinensis . . . . .	IX	Modena . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Euthalianus . . . . .	VI	Paris-Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Petropolit. rescript. . . . .	V-VII	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nitriensis . . . . .	V	London . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cyprius . . . . .	IX	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mosquensis . . . . .	IX	Moscow . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parisensis . . . . .	VIII	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Angelicus-Romanus . . . . .	IX	Rome . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Campensis . . . . .	X	Paris . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Wolfianus . . . . .	IX	London-Hamb. . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Purpureus . . . . .	VI	Lon-Rom-Vien . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mosquensis . . . . .	IX	Moscow . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Codices var. . . . .	VI-IX		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Codices var. . . . .	VI	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Guelferbytanus . . . . .	VI	Wolfenbüttel . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Porfirianus . . . . .	IX	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Basiliano-Vaticanus . . . . .	VIII	Rome . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Guelferbytanus B . . . . .	V	Wolfenbüttel . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nitriensis . . . . .	VI	London . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Vaticanus 354 . . . . .	X	Rome . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Borgianus-Petropolit. . . . .	V-VII	Rome-Petersb. . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nanianus . . . . .	X	Venice . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mosquensis . . . . .	IX	Moscow . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Codices var. . . . .	VII-IX		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Monacensis . . . . .	X	Munich . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Barberini . . . . .	VIII	Rome . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Dublinensis . . . . .	V-VI	Dublin . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Tischendorfianus . . . . .	IX	Oxford . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sangallensis . . . . .	IX	St. Gall . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Codices var. . . . .	VI-IX	Leipzig-Peterb. . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Oxoniensis . . . . .	IX	Oxford . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Zacynthius . . . . .	VIII	London . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Petropolitanus . . . . .	IX	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Rossanensis . . . . .	VI	Rossano . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

☞ = complete      S = incomplete      \* = considerable portion      0 = small portion  
 The Sinaiticus is by many esteemed the oldest, and is the only complete one of the fifty. Its date is about A.D. 350. It was discovered by Constantine Tischendorf at the Convent of St. Catherine in Mount Sinai in 1844-59. This is the manuscript most used by modern translators of the New Testament.—Translated and adapted from the French of "Le Phare de la Tour de Zion." *All Rights Reserved.*

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Again is one reminded of the absolute necessity of considering the context. Examining that in Jeremiah 4, beginning with verse 16, it is seen that these woes were pronounced against Jerusalem and consequently against the whole of the country over which it was the capital city. The faithful prediction of these desolations brought Jeremiah into much disfavour at the Court (Jer. 20: 1, 2; 37: 11-15), so that he was imprisoned and severely illtreated. As it was predicted, so it came to pass—"I beheld, and lo there was no man." (2 Kings 25: 22-26.) But this was the "olam" desolation referred to on page 126, and in due time it came to its end—in seventy years. Jeremiah's prophecy, therefore, refers to events that transpired 2500 years ago, and it has no reference to the Kingdom Age just impending.

The prophecy in Isaiah 34: 8-10 referred to the land of Idumea, with the people of which the Lord had a great controversy on account of their opposition to the children of Israel. But one must make allowance for the symbolic language used and must not force a literal significance, which would undoubtedly be foreign to the intention of the prophecy. For example, no present day visitor to Idumea would find verses 9 and 10 literally fulfilled. He would not see "the streams turned into pitch," "the dust into brimstone" and the land into "burning pitch, not quenched night nor day"; neither would he find the smoke thereof still ascending. He would see, however, the conditions resulting from the trouble symbolised by fire, brimstone, etc., namely, as stated in plain language, "from

generation to generation it shall lie waste." A prediction of terrible desolation is this prophecy, and Idumea has abundantly experienced it; but the context following, through chapter 35, predicts that this desolation "for ever and ever" (again the Hebrew word "olam") shall come to an end. The "desert" (Isa. 35: 1, 6) seems to refer to Idumea, rendered desolate by the Lord's vengeance. (34: 10-15.) And the promise is, "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose; in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." The restoration will be during the Kingdom Age—"the Times of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 21.) The prophecy in Isaiah 34: 8-10 cannot, therefore, be considered as being in opposition to those other prophecies, such as that in Isaiah 25: 6-9, which have foretold the blessing of all the families of the earth during the Kingdom Age.

**"But the Rest of the Dead  
Lived Not Again Until the  
Thousand Years Were Finished"**

"In Rev. 20: 5 we read, after verse 4, in which the resurrection of the saints is described, that the rest of the dead lived not again until the expiration of the thousand years' reign. Surely, this is contrary to the teaching of a blessing for all the families of the earth in the Kingdom Age, and by the reign of Christ and the Church."

It cannot be denied that the first part of Rev. 20: 5 is contrary to the presentations of former chapters of this volume, in which it is hoped the Student has



found something to help and encourage in the perusal of the divine Word. If the teaching of chapter IV. be deemed harmonious with Scripture, then anything opposed to it is similarly to be considered as opposed to Scripture. And these words are clearly in contradiction of such teaching as is found in Isaiah 25: 6-9—"In this mountain [during the Kingdom Age] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things"; for how could they enjoy such a feast if they were in their graves during the thousand years? The words in question are also contradictory to the teaching of St. Peter to the effect that the restoration times are to begin with our Lord's second advent; and if contradictory to this, then also to the teaching of all the holy prophets since the world began, for all of them foretold these times of blessing. Citations have been given in Chapter IV. from many of their writings on this grand subject.

It is worth observing, also, that these disputed words make Rev. 20: 5 self-contradictory. For if it be true that "the rest of the dead" are not to live again until the thousand years be ended, it is more than a little peculiar that the Revelator should, immediately after telling about "the rest of the dead," say, "This is the first resurrection." How could the "rest" be the "first?" If, however, the reader omit these peculiar words, and read direct from verse 4 to the latter part of verse 5, all will be clear, as follows:—"They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection."

The Scriptures may be searched from Genesis to Revelation, as with broom and candle, and nothing

like these words in Rev. 20: 5 will be found. In no other place is their sentiment expressed, but one cannot avoid coming in contact with the testimonies which abound to the contrary. It is therefore no surprise to learn that these words are not found in the Sinaitic manuscript of the New Testament, which is the oldest Greek MS. of the Scriptures yet found, and which is believed to date from the fourth century, A.D. In order that the latest information on the subject of the ancient Greek MSS. of Revelation may be placed before the reader, a selection is given from "Apocalypse of St. John," by H. B. Swete, London, 1906.

"The following Uncial MSS. contain the Greek text of the Apocalypse, or a part of it.

"Cod. Sinaiticus, 4th century.

"Cod. Alexandrinus, 5th century.

"Cod. Ephraemi Parisiensis, 5th century—contains 1: 1 to 3: 19; 5: 14 to 7: 14; 7: 17 to 8: 5; 9: 16 to 10: 10; 11: 3 to 13: 13; 18: 2 to 19: 5.

"Cod. Porfirianus Chiavensis, 9th century—contains 1: 1 to 16: 12; 17: 1 to 19: 21; 20: 9 to 22: 6.

"Cod. Vaticanus Gr. 2066 olim Basiliensis 105, 8th century.

"Cod. Kosinitzanus, 9th or 10th century—not yet edited or collated.

"Thus at present there are available only three complete and two imperfect uncials of the Apocalypse. The minuscules also are comparatively few; while we have 1725 MSS. of the Gospels, 520 of the Acts and Catholic Epistles and 619 of St. Paul, those of the Apocalypse do not, according to von Soden (1902), reach 230."

Of the above mentioned MSS., containing the Book of Revelation, the Sinaitic is the most ancient, and it omits the words in question from Rev. 20: 5. The

Alexandrine, about a century later than the Sinaitic, contains them. A very ancient Greek MS., the Vatican 1209, which is considered by some to be more ancient than the Sinaitic, omits the Book of Revelation entirely, therefore is not mentioned in Mr. Swete's list. The next most ancient MS. to the Alexandrine is the Ephraem. It contains important fragments of Revelation, but nothing after 19: 5. The next is the Basil MS., which is of the eighth century—three centuries after the Alexandrine—and here we find the next appearance of the disputed words. The next uncial is the Porfirianus, of the ninth century. It is fragmentary. It certainly omits the disputed words, but since at the same time it omits the first eight verses of the twentieth chapter, and begins at the ninth verse, it would scarcely be right to call this MS. in evidence. The next uncial is Kosinitsanus, of the ninth or tenth century, not yet edited, therefore not available as evidence.

The witnesses on this subject, then, are only three, as far as the ancient Greek MSS. are concerned. And as one of these belongs to the eighth century, and the other two are so much more ancient than it, one might say that practically the witnesses are only two, and that the question, as far as evidence at present available is concerned, lies between the Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS. Since the Sinaitic is about 100 years nearer the inspired sources\* than the other, its testi-

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\*It has pleased God to allow His Word to be transmitted through human instrumentalities, and He has not interfered to prevent the occasional manifestation of the imperfections of human copyists. The original writings from the hands of the

mony is that much more weighty, so that it is not at all difficult to arrive at the conclusion that these disputed words are indeed spurious, and that, being so, they require no further consideration at the hands of Bible Students. There is therefore no text of Scripture that can be cited as being contrary to the teaching of all the Holy Prophets concerning the glorious "Hope Beyond."

### **The Evolution Theory**

"Does not modern scientific thought, now proclaimed from many pulpits, and winning much popular favour, conflict with the teaching concerning Restitution?"

Yes, there is an irreconcilable conflict between the teachings of the Scriptures and the Evolution theory. Many have been the attempts made to harmonise the two, but not one has been successful. Indeed, the advocates of the theory are now so far convinced of this, that they have abandoned all effort to reconcile them.

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inspired Apostles are not now available, therefore we have to do the best we can with what Divine Providence has allowed to reach us, trusting the Lord so to overrule that His people may not be hindered by insurmountable obstacles to their sincere search for Truth. No doubt God could have handed down a perfect version of His Word for every people, nation and tongue; but the fact remains that He did not do so, possibly because to have done that would have made the acquisition of exact knowledge too easy, and too much like walking by sight, whereas His people are now to walk by faith. Thanks are due those scholars who have patiently, sometimes at the cost of impaired sight, deciphered the often well-nigh illegible treasures of the ancient manuscripts. The reader is recommended to peruse that excellent little work, "How We Got Our Bible," price, post paid, 10d., from our office.

But herein is involved the necessity of surrendering either the Bible or the Evolution theory; which shall it be? Many have already answered this question by dispensing with the Bible. The haste with which this is done by many learned men is cause for surprise, inasmuch as the Evolution theory is as yet only a theory, lacking the proof necessary to transform it to a certainty, while the Bible is an established fact. More especially is there occasion for surprise in the case of Christian ministers and college professors who hold their positions as defenders and exponents of the faith and misuse them by introducing and disseminating this subtle form of infidelity, surrendering to the enemy all that is vital to the Christian religion. This inconsistency on the part of those who occupy high places does not assist the people to respect either the Bible or the men who so readily betray it.

If evolution be the dictator of universal destiny, its processes should be visible in active operation in all parts of the world at the present time. Of the fact that they are not in evidence every truth seeker may convince himself by a little investigation. Notwithstanding the lack of proof, we are required by the evolutionist to believe that man has gradually evolved through untold ages from the simplest forms of life to the complex organism with which we are acquainted. More "faith" is really required to accept this assertion than to believe the Bible teaching, for the Scriptures are at least in harmony with present observa-

tion and experience. On his own claim (Isa. 41: 21-24), "show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods," which is the proper test of divinity, Jehovah and His word stand alone, unmatched and unapproachable. Can Evolution "show the things that are to come hereafter"? Can it even "show the former things what they be, that we may consider them?" The Bible shows both the past and the future: the fact that many of its prophecies have been fulfilled gives strong foundation for faith concerning those as yet unfulfilled. "Evolution," being comparatively a newcomer in the realm of thought (and already repudiated by some of the greatest scientists who formerly received it), should be treated with due consideration. Let us not therefore impose the supreme test by requiring a forecast of "things to come"; let us not ask to be shown even "the former things;" let us ask for demonstrations of the present only. Let "Evolution," if it be the way, the truth and the life, show us to-day individuals of lower forms changing into higher species. When it is able to do this, its claims for the past and the future may be considered. True scientific reasoning proceeds from the known to the unknown; the "evolved" reasoning, however, starting from that which is not known seeks to find that which does not exist.

The "Restitution of All Things," from the Evolution standpoint, would be far from a blessing. Not one of the learned professors or eloquent platform champions of the theory would wish to take even the

first step in the direction of "restitution" to a "former estate." To be a great blessing, Restitution must imply that our race once occupied a more favoured position than at present. The Scripture instruction on this point is definite, to the effect that our first parents were created perfect, and that their environment was suitable to intelligent beings in the enjoyment of divine favour. They sinned, and were expelled from the privileges before participated in, and were condemned to death. Restitution, therefore, to the estate of our first parents before sin entered, would be a blessing indeed, and much to be desired; reminding us of the ancient type which foreshadowed it—the Jubilee, under which all the family homesteads were restored to the original inheritors.—Lev. 25: 10-13; 27: 24.

As the Scripture teaching and the evolution theory cannot be harmonised, and as both cannot be true, each searcher after truth must choose which he will believe. "As for me and my house," said Joshua, "we will serve the Lord." Regardless of the fact that such choice throws discredit upon the great philosophers and wise men of this world (1 Cor. 1: 18-31), let the same sentiment be crystallised in our hearts; let us take our stand on the Lord's side. He that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. (1 Pet. 2: 6-8; Psalms. 22: 4, 5.) And when, in a few years, scientific investigators acknowledge the falsity of their present hypothesis, and seek to establish another, still more vain and un-Scriptural, we shall be equally undisturbed; for our

faith is founded on the Rock of Ages, which abides unmoved amidst the tempests of conflicting doubts and the varying winds of human tradition and theory.

Under the heading, "Are the Days of Darwinism Numbered?" the *Literary Digest* (Jan. 23, 1904) reviews the situation as follows:—

The recent death of Herbert Spencer lends special timeliness to the above topic, which is being actively debated just now in German theological circles. The immediate cause of the revival of interest in the present status of the Darwinian theory is found in a lengthy article by the veteran philosopher, Edward von Hartmann, which appears in Oswald's "Annalen der Naturphilosophie" (vol. ii., 1903), under the title "Der Niedergang der Darwinismus" ("The Passing of Darwinism"). That the famous "philosopher of the unconscious" is not prejudiced in favour of Biblical views has been more than clear since the publication of his "Selbstersetzung der Christentums" ("Disintegration of Christianity") in 1874. Hartmann in his new article has this to say:—

"In the sixties of the past century the opposition of the older group of savants to the Darwinian hypothesis was still supreme. In the seventies, the new idea began to gain ground rapidly in all cultured countries. In the eighties, Darwin's influence was at its height, and exercised an almost absolute control over technical research. In the nineties, for the first time, a few timid expressions of doubt and opposition were heard, and these gradually swelled into a great chorus of voices, aiming at the overthrow of the Darwinian theory. In the first decade of the twentieth century it has become apparent that the days of Darwinism are numbered. Among its latest opponents are such



savants as Eimer, Gustav Wolf, De Vries, Hoocke, von Wellstein, Fleischman, Reinke, and many others."

These facts, according to Hartmann's view, while they do not indicate that the Darwinian theory is doomed, undermine its most radical features.

"The theory of descent is safe, but Darwinism has been weighed and found wanting. Selection can in general not achieve any positive results, but only negative effects; the origin of species by minimal changes is possible, but has not been demonstrated. The pretensions of Darwinism as a purely mechanical explanation of results that show purpose are totally groundless."

Other scholars think that Hartmann does not do full justice to the reaction that has set in, particularly in Germany, against Darwinism. This sentiment is voiced by Professor Zoeckler, of the University of Greifswald, in the *Beweis des Glaubens* (No. xi.), a journal which recently published a collection of anti-Darwinian views from German naturalists. He calls the article of Hartmann "the tombstone-inscription [*Grabschrift*] for Darwinism," and goes on to say:

"The claim that the hypothesis of descent is secured scientifically must most decidedly be denied. Neither Hartmann's exposition nor the authorities he cites have the force of moral conviction for the claim for purely mechanical descent. The descent of organism is not a scientifically demonstrated proposition, although descent in an ideal sense can be made to harmonise with the Biblical account of creation."

Views of a similar kind are voiced in many quarters. The Hamburg savant, Edward Hoppe, has written a brochure, "Ist mit der Descendenz-Theorie eine religiöse Vorstellung vereinbar?" [Is the Theory of Evolution reconcilable with the Religious Idea?]

in which he takes issue, in the name of religion, with the purely naturalistic type of Darwinian thought. The most pronounced convert to anti-Darwinian views is Professor Fleischmann, of Erlangen, who has not only discarded the mechanical conception of the origin of being, but the whole Darwinian theory. He recently delivered a course of lectures, entitled "Die Darwin'sche Theorie," which have appeared in book form in Leipsic. He comes to this conclusion: "The Darwinian theory of descent has not a single fact to confirm it in the realm of nature. It is not the result of scientific research, but purely the product of the imagination."

## VI

# Some Better Thing for Us

—Heb. 11 : 40.—

**P**RECEDING chapters have sought to outline something of the general principles which should be observed by all who wish to study the Scriptures with any hope of success. There must be meekness, and willingness to learn, else how can one receive instruction? Being in the right frame of mind, there must also be prayer to God for the help of His Spirit, and this must be backed up by perseverance in endeavour to learn what He may be willing to teach His people at any given time. It must be acknowledged that God is a God of order, and that He has a Plan in process of fulfilment. The dispensational characteristics of this Plan must be recognised, and the Student must seek to apply each portion of Scripture to its appropriate dispensation and age, if he would avoid confusion, and find real enlightenment. The exhortation is, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth," "the much diver-

sified wisdom of God according to a plan of the ages.” —2 Tim. 2: 15; Eph. 3: 10, 11.

Some of the “diversities” of divine wisdom have been considered. The Scriptures have shown that God’s plan proposes a blessing for all the families of the earth. This blessing is to be given to every member of Adam’s race, and it consists of being enlightened by the True Light, and being brought to an accurate knowledge of the Truth. This blessing has in some measure been vouchsafed to a comparatively small number in past times, but is to be generally bestowed during the Kingdom Age, and it has been seen that those who in that time will be obedient to the truth shall be brought along to the state of human perfection, and shall enjoy perfect life on the earth for ever—“everlasting life.” The instrumentality through which the blessing is to be given is called the “Seed of Abraham.” This “Seed” consisted of Jesus, who has “blessed” with light and knowledge a small number chosen out from Jews and Gentiles, to become His joint heirs. And Jesus and His joint-heirs together will “bless” in the Kingdom Age mankind in general. (Gal. 3: 29.) Perhaps no portion of the divine Plan exhibits the “diversities” as much as this one, concerning the position to which the “Seed” is invited, which now comes forward for consideration.

At the time of our Lord’s crucifixion his followers were overwhelmed with consternation. The Shepherd was smitten, the sheep were scattered. Their hopes, centred in Him, were blasted, and they knew not what to do or which way to turn. The general disappointment was expressed in the sad words of the two on

the way to Emmaus—"We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." (Matt. 26: 31; Zech. 13: 7; Luke 24: 21.) But when they realised that He was raised from the dead, their hopes revived. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 1: 3, 4.) Our blessed Redeemer has been made the express image of the Father's person, and God has appointed Him to be the heir of all things. (Heb. 1: 2, 3; Matt. 28: 18; Phil. 2: 9-11.) No feeling of surprise overcomes us as we realise this, for we appreciate that the Lamb that was slain is worthy "to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing," and this will yet be acclaimed by every creature which is in "heaven," and on the "earth," and by such as are in the "sea."—Rev. 5: 12, 13.

No; one is not surprised at God's determination that His dear Son should have the pre-eminence in all things. (Col. 1: 17-19.) The surprise is herein, that the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," to which our blessed Lord was raised from the dead, is

### **"Reserved In Heaven for You"**

who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Pet. 1: 5.

Oh, what riches of grace! what marvels of condescension toward men of low estate! what abounding love and kindness! To think that such as ourselves should have the opportunity to become joint heirs with the Son of God, the heir of all things! Words fail us; we are

“Lost in wonder, love, and praise.”

Were this the only portion of Scripture setting forth such an amazing thought one might well hesitate to grasp it as being applicable to God's people of this time; but there is much to confirm it, as Rom. 8: 16-18; 6: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 49; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; 2 Thes. 2: 14, and many similar passages.

In the first place, then, it will be seen that the invitation to heavenly glory began with the Gospel Age; it was not presented to the holy prophets and others of olden times as a calling, though the prophets were caused to speak of it, and were interested by it, so much so that they inquired about it. “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace [favour] that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed that *not unto themselves but unto us* they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Peter 1: 10-12.) That the holy prophets may have experienced regrets at not be-

ing permitted to run the race of suffering for this great prize can easily be imagined; but as they must have realised their disappointment to be His appointment, they were not grieved or embittered thereby, but rather rejoiced in the greatness of God's favour to others. A noble example of this will be referred to later in this study.

If it be asked, why should God have passed by the holy prophets and other ancient worthies, withholding from them the great honour now extended to us of the Gospel Age, the answer must be, for the present, it was the good pleasure of His will so to do. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour [less honour]?" (Rom. 9: 21.) There is no reason to believe that God's people of the Gospel Age are by natural endowment better qualified for joint heirship with Christ than were his people of former times. Indeed, the portion just cited from Romans would seem to show that we are neither better nor worse than they, all being of one lump of clay. Whether we do or do not understand the reason for so marvellous an exhibition of divine grace during this age, we who have heard of and accepted the wonderful favour must give all diligence if we would make our calling and election sure.—2 Peter 1: 5-15.

There is no lack of Scripture to establish the teaching that this "high calling" was not made known as a calling in former ages. "God, Who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." "Therefore we ought to give the

more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect *so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord*, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?" (Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 1-4.) Here we get the thought that this "great salvation," which "began to be spoken by the Lord," was so different from what had been understood up to that time, that special mention is made of the fact that it "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him," and also that God Himself testified to the authenticity of this, the beginning of the New Covenant, by special demonstrations of divine power, as at the inauguration of the Law Covenant. (Heb. 12: 18-28.) This agrees precisely with 1 Peter 1: 12.

The Jews hoped for everlasting life under their Law; they searched the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life; but they acquired no information about immortality and incorruptibility. This is not to be considered strange, for both life and immortality were brought to light by our Lord and Saviour, and by His teaching of the Gospel. The apostles were able to comprehend the difference between eternal life and incorruptibility, and to explain it to others. (2 Tim. 1: 10, 11.) Incorruptibility, or immortality, is that quality of having life in one's self, neither dependent upon food for sustenance nor



affected by any influence whatever. This was originally a possession of the Father solely; He gave it to His Son at resurrection, and proposes to give the same incorruptible inheritance to the Church of the Gospel Age, not having offered it to any before our Lord's first advent. He is the forerunner for us into this heavenly glory. (John 5: 26; 1 Peter 1: 3-5; 2 Peter 1: 4; Heb. 6: 20.) Eternal or everlasting life, though sometimes applied, as a descriptive term, to the reward of the Gospel Age Church, is not so decisive an expression as immortality. "Eternal life" also describes the earthly life which will be enjoyed endlessly by those who will experience the full measure of restitution blessings in the Kingdom Age. Although that life will be perfect, it will be sustained by appropriate foods, as was Adam's perfect life in the Garden of Eden; but without proper sustenance their life would fail, just as Adam's life, though perfect, failed when he was driven from the Garden.—Psalm 115: 16; Micah 4: 4; Isaiah 65: 17, 21, 22; Gen. 1: 29; 3: 22-24.

### **"Some Better Thing for Us"**

Attend now to the lesson of Hebrews 11. In this, which is called the Faith chapter, we are told of the lives of those Ancients who sought to please God. They testified by their lives, by the endurance of much persecution for righteousness' sake, the sincerity of their professions of love to God. Take the example of Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather "than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of the anointed greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." (Heb. 11: 24-26.)

The word "Christ" means anointed. In this case, the reference is to the anointed people, Israel. Consider well all the illustrious examples of faith and patience narrated in this chapter. By these, the Ancients, being dead, yet speak to us (Heb. 11: 4), and so it is that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses—testifiers—to the faithfulness of Him who has promised. (Heb. 12: 1.) "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in skeepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, *God having provided some better thing for us*, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11: 37-40.) The excellent things provided for them are earthly (Gen. 13: 14-17); the "better thing" provided for us is reserved in heaven.—Col. 3: 1, 2; Phil. 3: 10, 11, 20; 2 Cor. 5: 1.

Again the question rises—has God provided the "better thing" for us because we are better than were the Ancients? Could we suppose that our faith and patience are greater than theirs, we might think yes; but as it is not possible for us to think so highly of ourselves, we come back to the only answer now available, and, acknowledging that there is no superiority in ourselves, admit that the reason why we are more highly favoured than they were is because we are living in the age which God had arranged for the publishing of the High Calling.

## John the Baptist

The line of division between the earthly calling of the Jewish age and the heavenly calling of the Gospel age is drawn with considerable distinctness. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached." "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John." "From the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."—Luke 16: 16; Matt. 11: 13, 12.

Of John the Baptist we are told: "There hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11: 11.) This is very remarkable, showing as it does that the greatest and most highly honoured of the prophets will have no place in the heavenly realm, where the inheritance of the Church is reserved. And, again, we have to acknowledge that this is not because of superiority in us, but wholly because we are living in the time of this favour, and he was not. It is all of God's grace, and is His own arrangement. But if John will have no place in heaven, where will his place be? The answer is, On earth, with the faithful of the past, for whom great things are provided, though some "better thing" is provided for us of the Gospel age.

"Where will you spend eternity?" is a solemn question; and we are glad that the true Christian can in faith explain his hope of heaven. It is to be regretted, however, that with many the only alternative for those who have not this hope is everlasting torment or annihilation. The earth as a possible inheritance is quite

lost sight of. In view of Matt. 11: 11, how can the question be answered from their standpoint concerning John the Baptist? "Where will John the Baptist spend eternity?"

John understood his position and prospects perfectly, as his own words show. "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the *bride* is the *bridegroom*; but the *friend* of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled. . . . He that cometh from above [Jesus, the "bridegroom"] is above all; he that is of the earth [John the Baptist, the bridegroom's "friend"] is earthly [literally, "of the earth," being the same phrase as those before and after], and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven [Jesus] is above all."—John 3: 27-31

A greater manifestation than this of true humility, and that nobility of character which rejoices in the superior position of others, can scarcely be imagined. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." The least of the divine favours is not to be forcibly seized, but is to be accepted gratefully, and as an unmerited favour. This was John's standpoint, and from it he was able to see what others have not discerned. He was able to recognise Jesus as the "bridegroom," and that there would be a "bride" to share the heavenly inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled. As for himself, he, John the Baptist, was not the "bridegroom," and he was not a member of the

"bride" class; but he was the "friend." Was John grieved, embittered or made jealous by the realisation that some coming after him, some, indeed, of his own disciples, were to be granted higher positions than his? No; John was a true nobleman. He *rejoiced* at the exalted prospects of the "bridegroom" and "bride," realising that they could not possibly receive the glorious inheritance except it were given them from heaven. If it were the divine will that the "bridegroom" and "bride" be exalted to the divine nature, and that the "friend" remain on earth, John not only acquiesced, but he rejoiced in it. The contemplation of such lowliness, yet grandeur, of character cannot be other than profitable to us all; it stimulates imitation, so that one could wish himself separated from joint heirship with Christ, if by this means John the Baptist could be admitted thereto.—Rom. 9: 3.

### **Thy Fathers**

### **Thy Children**

Near the close of His earthly ministry, our Lord effectually and permanently silenced His critics by asking them, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, the son of David. He saith unto them: How then doth David in Spirit [by inspiration] call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make Thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions"—Matt. 22: 42-46.

The point of this lies in the fact that under the tribal form of government the father of the family was

recognised as the chief, and it was unthinkable that a father should speak of his son as his lord or chief. Yet the answer to our Saviour's question was ready to their hand, in the Scriptures, and the Pharisees, being diligent students, should have been able to point to it. The Saviour, at His first advent, was described in the symbolic language of prophecy as "a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a *Branch* out of his roots." (Isa. 11: 1.) In the glory of His resurrection, of His present rule over His people (Col. 1: 13), and of the Kingdom age, He is symbolically described as "a *Root* of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and His rest shall be glorious." (Isa. 11: 10; Rom. 15: 9-19.) That is to say, He who as concerning the flesh came forth from Jesse, as a *Branch*, is the *Root* of Jesse, and shall be the source of resurrection life to Jesse.

This is beautifully described in Psalm 45. The principal characters of the Psalm are the King (Jehovah), the King's Son (our Lord Jesus), and the King's daughter (the Gospel age Church, sometimes called the Bride, the Lamb's wife). The Psalm is addressed to the King's Son, and in verse 16 is found the peculiar statement, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." The fathers of the King's Son were Jesse, David, and others in the line of his fleshly ancestry. These will be children of the King's Son when He raises them from death at the beginning of the Kingdom age. Whereas they were His fathers, they will then be His children, and He their father. "The Everlasting Father" (literally, "the Father of the

Age") is one of the Saviour's grand titles (Isa. 9: 6). Then they will recognise Him as their Lord, according to the word of inspiration.

The King's Son is Himself the appointed King for that time (Psalm 2: 6), and with Him will be associated the King's daughter, all glorious in her clothing of "wrought gold," emblematic of the divine nature which is to be granted to her, the Church of the Gospel Age. (2 Pet. 1: 4; 1 Pet. 1: 3-5.) These will enjoy the heavenly inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and will be kings and priests unto God. (Rev. 20: 4.) But the one-time fathers, who shall then be the children of their child, Jesus, will be made "*princes in all the earth*," participating under the direction of the heavenly King in the grand work of blessing all the people with the Truth, and helping the willing ones to understand and follow after righteousness.—Isa. 61: 6.

The "princes" are described in Psalm 45: 14, 15, as the "virgins" (companions or friends) following the "King's daughter"—the Bride of Christ.—John 3: 29.

From this it is seen that the Kingdom of God is to be organised in two divisions, one heavenly and one earthly. Our Lord spoke of the heavenly portion when intimating that John the Baptist would not be in the Kingdom. (Luke 7: 28.) The legislative functions will be vested in the invisible heavenly Kings, and the interpretative privileges will belong to the visible earthly "princes." This is intimated in Isa. 2: 3 and Micah 4: 2—"The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, will be seen in the earthly portion of the Kingdom of God by some who

boasted in their lineage, but who will not be admitted. Denied admittance into the ruling privileges of that time, they will stand without, weeping and gnashing their teeth in vain regrets at finding themselves subjects instead of rulers. Having been so ready to take the "upper room" at the feast, they will be filled with unspeakable chagrin on finding themselves relegated to the lower positions. Let us hope that they will be rightly exercised by the experience, and become loyal subjects of the Kingdom; and let us in the meantime take to ourselves the appropriate lesson on the subject of humility.—Luke 13: 24-29.

That there is in this a lesson for God's people of the Gospel Age is not to be gainsaid; for it is plainly indicated that an experience similar to that predicted for the boasting Pharisees is prepared for a similar class in Christendom. "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied [Dean Alford translates "preached"] in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7: 21-23.) Referring, as this does, to a class who acknowledge Christ as Lord, it cannot have been spoken of infidels and other open rejecters of the Son of God, but must be understood as pointing to a large class of energetic workers in Christendom. The Lord of all will know how to distinguish between those who say, "Lord, Lord," with their lips, but are



not thus expressing the real sentiments of their hearts, and those others who do indeed "hold the Head." In the parable, the virgins without oil in their vessels were excluded. (Matt. 25.) It is for us, who read His solemn words, to see to it that our activities are so ordered as to be in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. His will is that the same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2: 5-8) and that our service should in its small way contribute to the forwarding of the interests of His grand plan. And as the various ages have shown the "much diversified wisdom" of God, it behooves us to ascertain which portion of the divine programme is now being accomplished, and to join in those labours, lest, instead of being co-workers with them, we be found fighting against God. (1 Cor. 3: 6-16; 2 Cor. 5: 18—6: 10.) We do not want to be doing the right thing at the wrong time, or the wrong thing at the right time, but the right thing at the right time. What would we have thought of the "twelve," if when sent out on their missionary journeys and expressly forbidden to go to the Samaritans and the Gentiles they had taken upon themselves the responsibility of improving on their marching orders, by going where they were told not to go, lest some soul be left unsaved because of their not going? And how would the Lord have viewed the activity of His disciples if, instead of tarrying for ten days in Jerusalem to wait for the "Power from on high," they had said, "Let us be up and doing, lest some soul perish while we are waiting for the promised Spirit"?

We are not to anticipate the Lord's arrangements, neither are we to lag behind. It is not for us to presume that the Lord would be pleased to have his people undertake the "wonderful work" of the Kingdom age, of converting the world before the "due time" for it. Shall we suppose that God in heaven will alter His plans because some on earth have made a mistake? By no means! Let us, rather, humbly inquire of the Lord, and as we find in His Word the teaching that the Gospel age is for the purpose of giving a "witness" to all nations and of "taking out a people for His name," and that the work of blessing the remainder of men will have attention in the time appointed for them, *but not before that due time, no matter how earnestly any of us endeavour to bring it about*, we should conform our thoughts and activities to His directions.

### **Servants, or Sons?**

In Heb. 3: 5, 6, attention is drawn to the "diversity" between the Jewish and Gospel ages. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a *servant*, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a *Son* over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Moses, the honoured leader of the Lord's host, prophet and law-giver, priest and ruler, mediator of a covenant between God and the people, and in addition, after they had sinned, advocate for the people before God, was a servant of God, the head of a house of servants. After his death he was still regarded as the head of the nation, for his influence remained among them in the books of

the law. To this people came Jesus, the Son of God, prophet like unto Moses, giver of a new commandment, priest after another order, appointed King to sit in the "holy hill of Zion," Mediator of a New Covenant, and Advocate for those under the New Covenant, when transgressors, offering to as many of the servants as would believe on Him the opportunity to become sons of God. (John 1: 11, 12.) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son." (Gal. 4: 7.) The house of servants had promises of earthly things, and these will be fulfilled to them in due time. (Ezek. 37: 21-25; 36: 24-38; Jer. 30: 18-22; Isa. 65: 18-25.) The house of sons has promises, exceeding great and precious, of heavenly things, and these will be given them in due season.—2 Cor. 5: 1, 2; Matt. 5: 11, 12; 1 Pet. 1: 4; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Rom. 5: 2; Col. 3: 1, 2; Phil. 3: 10-14.

### **The Course to Pursue**

All who have followed thus far the delineation of the "diversities," and have appreciated the wonders of the grace of God in granting to some the privilege of becoming joint heirs with the Redeemer, will be deeply concerned to know what conditions are attached to the "high calling." Since the Apostle exhorts God's people to give all diligence, to make their calling and election sure to so wonderful a favour, it is to be expected that some stipulations are mentioned, which will need to be fulfilled by all candidates for this highest of honours. These must now be considered, and it will be assumed that the start is being made from the condition of ignorance of and alienation from God.

Our Lord said, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (John 5:

22; 9: 39); and when He went away He promised to send a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which should perform, for Him, a two-fold office; (1) to "convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment," and (2) to guide the disciples into all truth. (John 14: 3, 15-18; 15: 26, 27; 16: 7-15.) As the Son, while on earth, was the representative of the Father, so, since the departure of the Son, the Holy Spirit in the Church is the representative of the Son. The Holy Spirit came from the Father to the Son, and to the Church from the Son. "He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; . . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall *receive of Mine*, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16: 13-16; 14: 17, 26; 1 Cor. 2: 10; Acts 2: 33.) That the Holy Spirit is not a person\* but a holy power or influence is

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\*If the "Comforter" is not a person, why is the masculine pronoun used in referring to Him? For the same reason that the "iron gate" of the prison (Acts 12: 10) is referred to with a masculine pronoun, and also that the "salt" (Mark 9: 50) is described as having lost "his" saltiness. Those who understand any of the Continental languages have no difficulty here, for they are familiar with the grammatical construction which requires personal pronouns for inanimate objects. Thus in German it is ungrammatical to refer to a "table" by a neuter pronoun, as is the proper grammatical form in English, for in German the noun is masculine, and therefore requires the masculine pronoun; "fork" is feminine; "chair" masculine, etc., etc. In the Greek, the noun *Paracletos* is *masculine*, and therefore requires a masculine pronoun; the same is true of many other words. The noun "spirit," on the

shown by Peter's words, "Jesus . . . hath *shed forth this which ye now see and hear.*" This was exactly what our Lord had promised,—*"Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."*—Acts 2: 33; 1: 8.

The work of the Holy Spirit, to convict or convince the world of sin, was a continuation of the work which our Lord began during His ministry, for it was His constant effort to bring home to the minds of the Jewish people the fact that while they considered themselves free they were really the slaves of sin, needing a deliverer, and that He himself was the only one that could bring about their release. He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (John 15: 22-24; 9: 39-41; 8: 30-36; Matt. 9: 13.) Throughout the Gospel Age the same methods are employed to convince of sin as were used by our Lord; namely, *the truth* concerning sin and its penalty and the way of escape provided in Him; and, when this truth is grasped by anyone who hears it, he is convinced, not only concerning sin in general, but also concerning his own sins in particular and his own need of a Saviour. The Acts of the Apostles records how from Pentecost onward

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other hand, in the Greek, is *neuter* gender, and therefore requires a neuter pronoun, as in Rom. 8: 16, 26. The use of the masculine pronoun in John 14: 16, 26, etc., no more proves that the Holy Spirit is a person than the use of the same form in Acts and Mark proves that "gate" and "salt" are persons. In translating from a Continental language, ancient or modern, into English, it is the duty of the translator to adapt the gender of the nouns and pronouns to the English idiom, and vice versa.

they preached repentance and forgiveness of sins, in harmony with the Lord's last commission, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in fulfilment of that office of the Spirit described in John 16: 9. (Acts 2: 37, 38; 3: 19, 26; 5: 31; 10: 43; 13: 38; 26: 18.) Not only was this the case in their discourses to the Jews, but it was the first specific point made in their preaching to the Gentiles; for, as Paul said to the Athenians, though previously their condition of idolatry and moral corruption had been largely "winked at," God, "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17: 29, 30; 14: 16.) The glad tidings for Cornelius and his household were the same as for the Jews—"Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10: 43; 11: 18; 13: 38-46; 26: 17-20; 28: 28.) The same glad tidings of the forgiveness of sin run through all the Gospels and the Epistles, and the joy of those thus forgiven is frequently pictured in the Apocalypse.

When convincing the world of sin, the Holy Spirit (through the disciples who possess the Spirit, and through the Word which expresses the will of God) also convinces the attentive hearer of righteousness. When He was present in the world, the Lord Himself convinced of righteousness, for He was a living example of perfection and holiness; and the contrast between Him, as the embodiment of every grace, and the people around, steeped in sin, superstition and self-righteousness, was unmistakeable. He was as light shining in darkness. But when He went away, it was necessary that the contrast between light and darkness, good and evil, holiness and depravity, truth and error,

be maintained; and that blessed privilege He has bestowed upon His people in whom the Holy Spirit is a mighty power. The Holy Spirit in them convinces the onlooker that this is righteousness; this is what it means to conquer self, to purge out sin, and to live the life of God. In how many sinners have the first impulses toward a holy life been inspired by observing the kindness, forbearance and loving spirit of a true Christian! And the desire to be like that has brought abhorrence of self, and finally inquiry as to how the change can be induced. And with what gladness they have heard of the Saviour, of the forgiveness of sins and of the possibilities of reconciliation and sonship!

The Holy Spirit is to convince the world of judgment. As already pointed out, our Lord's words and ministry were a condemnation of the proud and Pharisaical, to such an extent that He said, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" But His death was a judgment in a still larger sense, in that by the payment of the ransom-price He purchased the race and so "cast out" the "Prince of this world," in whom the whole world lay helpless. (John 12: 31-33; 1 John 5: 19; Eph. 2: 2.) Sin can no longer tyrannise over those who flee for refuge to the Great Sin Bearer. The judgment against sin is decisive; the ability to flee from it is to be had for the asking. (John 8: 34-36; Rom. 5: 8-11, 19, 21; 6: 11-14, 23.) Sin is revealed as the Tyrant, and Jesus is revealed as the Prince of Life and Peace, who has conquered the Tyrant, and is ready to liberate his captives. This also it has been the privilege of the Church, as the dwelling place of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:

19), to proclaim. As "ambassadors for Christ, . . . we pray in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5: 20.

The gospel (or good news) of the Kingdom is described by the Lord as seed sown broadcast, which falls upon different sorts of ground. It finds no lodgment whatever in the hard "wayside" heart; the stony ground receives it but for a time; for, though it springs up quickly, it has no depth of earth, and cannot survive the sun of persecution. In other hearts the effect of the truth is also transitory; for, though the ground is good, the thorns are already in possession, and their rank growth soon chokes the seed: the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are more potent than the Word of the Kingdom. In all these cases the heart is ultimately left very much as it was before the truth entered it. Lastly, the effect of the gospel message on some is like seed falling upon good ground, which brings forth fruit, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred-fold. (Matt. 13: 18-23.) The sun of persecution shines upon them as well as upon the stony ground class, and the cares of this life would overwhelm them as they do others; but, by the grace of God, the thorns are kept down, and the hot sun of persecution becomes, with the "showers of blessing," an assistance to their development as children of the Kingdom.

The first necessity, then, that any may be recovered from the condition of ignorance and alienation from God is a measure of enlightenment; for "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10: 14.) Sufficient light is required to



make plain the lost and ruined condition in which all descendants of Adam are by nature, hence his need of a Redeemer; also that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life. These verities realised, and the divine provision under the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sins through faith in the Redeemer being gratefully accepted and confessed to, the Believer is no longer in a state of alienation from God, but is "made nigh by the blood of Christ." He has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. 2: 12, 13; Rom. 5: 1; 10: 8-10.) This state or condition is called Justification.

Just at this point many Believers have halted. To some, the joy and peace that attended the assurance of sins forgiven have seemed so wonderful and all-comprising, as almost to preclude "more to follow." Never was a greater mistake.

### **Hope of Glory**

The Believer, at peace with God, has access also by Jesus into "this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5: 2.) Attentive reading of verses 1 and 2 together shows two states; (1) "peace with God," (2) "hope of the glory of God." The second is not entered at the same time as the first, nor independently of it; rather, we should say, that the second is entered after the first and through the first, just as the priest could enter the Tabernacle in the Wilderness only by passing through the Court

in which it stood; yet while in the Tabernacle he was also within the Court.

The entrance into the second state is by the door of consecration and sacrifice; hence the necessity of prior entry into the first state, wherein justification is obtained, because only that which is holy is acceptable as a sacrifice on the divine altar. The unbelieving, unjustified world is not invited to consecrate and sacrifice; such an opportunity can be extended only to those who are already in the "household of faith," and recognisable as "brethren." "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12: 1.) Consecration to sacrifice means the giving up of the will to God that His will may henceforth be done in and by the consecrated one. This is shown in Rom. 12: 2—"And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." The will means the entire personality and all its possessions, and, therefore, the invitation is expressed as in verse 1, "present your bodies."\*

The Apostle views the consecrated Believer as a "new creature (2 Cor. 5: 17), just beginning life and the formation of character. He exhorts, "Be not conformed to this world!" And how little heed has been

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\*We shall be pleased to supply a pamphlet explaining the significance of Baptism in water, which is a representation of consecration. Send three stamps.

given by Christendom generally, and by many Christians in particular, to this exhortation! Conformity to this age and its spirit has been sought by Christendom, instead of avoided. The excuse given has been that something must be done to attract and hold the people; therefore, instead of remaining separate from the present evil world, and its evil institutions, Christendom has adopted a good many of the "attractions," thus corrupting itself without benefitting the world. Losing sight of the purpose of God that during this age a people was to be "gathered out," Christendom has also, with most lamentable results, forgotten that the Gospel of Christ is the appointed power of God unto salvation, and that it is capable of attracting as many as the Lord requires for His present purpose.

To carry out the consecration to a successful issue means that a great conflict must be waged, for the "flesh" thus devoted to death is not in accord with the sacrifice; neither is the spirit of the world in harmony with a consecrated life; and the "Prince of the Power of the Air" is most determinedly opposed to everyone who seeks to do the will of God. Notwithstanding these powerful enemies, the consecrated one need not fear nor be discouraged, because, "if God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. 8: 31.

The immediate object of the consecrated life is that the consecrated one may become a copy of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8: 29; 7: 18.) It was predestinated by God that He would have a number of such "copies," the selection of the individuals being accomplished by the above described process. After consecration, a course of discipline must be undergone. "Whom the

Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. 12: 6.) Implicit obedience must be learned (Heb. 5: 7-9; Phil. 2: 12), and the experiences of life, as well as the promises of the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit, work in them, as agencies of God and of Christ, to cleanse and perfect the character. (Phil. 2: 13-15; Eph. 5: 26, 27; Rom. 8: 11; John 17: 17.) Only those who submit willingly to this severe training can be considered seriously in the race for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 3: 7-14.

The importance of the development of the character-copy of God's Son in the consecrated ones who have first received the New Covenant blessing of "forgiveness of sins" is most forcibly stated in 2 Peter 1: 4-15. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love. . . Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for *if ye do these things, ye shall never fall*; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." And again, in Heb. 12: 14, the extreme importance of this is emphasised. "Follow. . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." If we become like Him in character now, we shall, according to the terms of the high calling, become like Him in person, and shall see His face, shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, always to be with Him and share His glory. (1 John 3: 2; Rev. 14: 1-4.) While, as already discerned, there will be vast multitudes of others saved, they will be on earth, human

beings. The "little flock" of "first fruits" will alone become joint heirs with the Redeemer in His heavenly inheritance.

The way of consecration is difficult. Just as Jesus suffered for righteousness, so are consecrated Believers in Him invited to "follow His steps" (1 Peter 2: 19-23); "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." These are not easy steps in which to follow, for the tendency of the old nature is to do the reverse of these things; nevertheless, His promised grace is sufficient for all who really desire and are endeavouring in all sincerity to make their calling and election sure; and God is faithful and just to forgive us our trespasses, when confessed, even as we forgive them that trespass against us.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him"; this is the gracious promise. If any expect to attain the reigning position without having experienced present suffering, they must be disappointed. And not every sort of suffering answers to this, but only "if so be that we *suffer with Him*, that we may be also glorified together." (2 Tim. 2: 12; Rom. 8: 17.) As stated in 1 Peter 2, suffering for our own faults does not count, but suffering as Jesus our forerunner suffered, and enduring hardship in the service of the truth, is what counts. Not many are of this mind (Phil. 2: 5-9); therefore not many will be glorified with Him, but only a "little flock." There is no hint that the conditions are variable, so that some may enter into the glories

of the Kingdom without having endured the suffering; there is but the one way, that in which our Redeemer walked. But even in the sufferings we may rejoice, as did the Apostle, saying, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church: whereof I am made a minister; . . . whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."—Col. 1: 24-29; 2 Tim. 2: 3, 8-10.

As the glories promised to the overcomers (Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17, 27; 3: 5, 12, 21) are great, and as "grace sufficient" for each trial and difficulty is assured (1 Pet. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 10: 13; 2 Cor. 12: 9), it is but just that the penalty attached to wilful apostasy is correspondingly severe. In Heb. 6: 4-9; 10: 26-31, the intimation is that "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come," are in a condition of great responsibility. For such to sin wilfully, and to crucify afresh the Son of God, indicates the possession of so hardened a disposition that renewal to repentance would be impossible, even under the benign influences of the Kingdom Age. To those who, through the cares of life, or through discouragement or weakness, have not been as faithful and zealous as they should have been, and who sincerely regret past errors, and earnestly desire to make a fresh start in the service of God, these words are not a condemnation; for

the very fact that they are penitent and desirous to do better gives evidence that it is possible to renew them, and therefore that they have not sinned the "sin unto death." (1 John 5: 12-17; 2 Pet. 2: 17-22; Jude 12, 13; Matt. 12: 31, 32.) Forgiveness is arranged for as described in 1 John 1: 9; 2: 1, 2, on the basis of the New Covenant, which was ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ, who is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Only a comparatively few out of earth's billions have had the enlightenment above referred to, for only a small proportion have heard the gospel; and of those who have heard something about Jesus and salvation, only a minority have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have experienced in advance the powers of the Kingdom Age for the eradication of sin and the development of righteousness.

It is not surprising that some asked, "Are there few that be saved?" No answer was given at the time, except the exhortation, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate!" If the conditions seem severe, compare them with the reward, and join in the sentiment of the Apostle, "I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 18.) If the requirements are too great for our feeble strength, let us not be discouraged even by this. If we had only our own strength to depend on, the best of us must fail; having God's strength made perfect in our weakness, the feeblest must succeed. "In all things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."—Rom. 8: 37.

### The Gifts of the Spirit

A moment's digression from the main topic, to consider the "gifts of the Holy Ghost," mentioned in Heb. 2: 4, will not be amiss. Considerable attention is being attracted to these in our day, because some are claiming the possession and operation of these gifts. The statement is frequently made that, had the Church not relapsed into worldliness, she would have been the happy possessor and demonstrator of these gifts throughout the age, from Pentecost till now. Whence, of course, arises the claim that those who possess, or say they possess, these gifts to-day (though so far as we have information the present day claims centre about the one gift of "tongues"), are superior in spirituality to others less fortunate than themselves. From all parts of Christendom, and even from heathendom, the accounts of wonderful experiences are published; therefore it behoves God's people to understand what His Word says about these "gifts," lest they be taken in a snare of the adversary.

Without doubt, the Church has relapsed into great worldliness; and it is very saddening that one must acknowledge that she grows worse instead of better. And yet, this worldliness is not the reason why the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased to be present in the Church. For even in the midst of the sins of Christendom, God has always had some, if only a few, that were faithful to him, and it cannot be supposed that they, any more than the faithful of the present generation, would have been deprived of the "gifts" on



account of the evil doing of the majority, had it been God's will that these "gifts" should continue in the Church during the whole of the age.

That the "gifts" were part of the divine testimony to the authenticity of the new teaching of the "great salvation," which "began to be spoken by the Lord," has already been noted in Heb. 2:4. Might it not be reasonably supposed that after the new teaching was well established, and there was no further need for miraculous demonstrations on its behalf, these "gifts," "signs" and "wonders" would be withdrawn, and this quite apart from considerations of the spiritual condition of the Church?

That this was the divine arrangement is made clear by consideration of the method employed for the bestowing of the spiritual gifts. While all the believers of apostolic times received at least one "gift," whether of healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, or some other (1 Cor. 12:4-11), there was only one way by which such gifts could be communicated; namely, by the laying on of an Apostle's hands, the only exceptions being at Pentecost and at the conversion of Cornelius' household—the latter being essential to establish in the minds of the Apostles themselves the fact that the Gentiles should be "fellow-heirs." This special honour and privilege was granted only to the "twelve apostles of the Lamb." There were talented evangelists in those days, under whose preaching many were converted to Christ; but these could not impart a "gift," although they could use such as had been imparted to them.

Philip preached Christ in Samaria, and many, including Simon Magus, believed; and all wondered at the miracles which were worked through him. When the apostles at Jerusalem heard how the Word had been received in Samaria, they sent Peter and John, who prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for although these believers had been baptised, the Spirit had not fallen on them. Then the apostles laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. "And when Simon saw that *through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given*, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8: 5-19.) Simon marvelled at the miracles done by Philip, but he wondered still more at the privilege the apostles had to impart the power to do miracles; and this latter ability he desired to buy.

Since only the apostles of Jesus had the power to confer these gifts of tongues, healing, etc., and since there were but twelve of these, and no succession arranged for, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, revealing but twelve names, as Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21: 14), it follows that after the death of the last Apostle there would be no one in the Church with power to confer spiritual gifts; therefore, believers converted after the death of the last of the Apostles could not receive such gifts. At the time of the decease of the last Apostle there would be many Christians in possession of these gifts; but eventually these would finish their course, and when the last of these had passed away, the miraculous endowments of prophecies, tongues, etc., would have "failed" (literally,

“vanished away”) from the Church. (1 Cor. 13-8.) It must be concluded, therefore, that the “gifts” of the Spirit were intended only as a temporary help, to start the Church on its way, and that by about the end of the second century, A.D., they, having fulfilled their mission, had “vanished away.”

The demonstration on the higher plane of the Spirit's presence with the Church in and since those days has been in the power to understand and to expound the Gospel and in the possession and exhibition of the “fruits.” (John 15: 1-5; Gal. 5: 22, 23.) These are of gradual growth in each faithful, consecrated one. Of the “fruits” of character our Lord said, “By their fruits ye shall know them” (Matt. 7: 15-20); and of the ability to understand and to teach the “deep things of God,” we read, “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; and He will show you things to come.” “The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you.” (John 16: 13; 1 John 2: 27.) This indicates that the correct understanding of the Scriptures and the teaching office are confined to the true Church, and that no Christian can expect to receive the real interpretation from any outside source. The world by wisdom knows not God, and His ways are foolishness unto them; but in the Church God reveals His purposes. “God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets [i.e., expounders], thirdly teachers,” etc., for public service; and each member has the privilege not only of believing and rejoicing in the truth, but also, as he has ability and opportunity, of declaring it for the exhortation, edifica-

tion and comfort of others. (Rom. 12: 3-8; 1 Cor. 14: 1-5; Heb. 5: 12-14; Jer. 23: 28.) Instead of walking by the sight of miracles and wonders, God's people have been commanded to walk by faith, relying upon His Word, and its sanctifying power, for the Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and they have been given "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. 3: 14-17.

"My soul, be on thy guard;  
Ten thousand foes arise;  
The hosts of sin are pressing hard  
To draw thee from the prize.

"O watch and fight and pray;  
The battle ne'er give o'er;  
Renew it boldly every day,  
And help divine implore.

"Ne'er think the victory won,  
Nor once at ease sit down;  
Thine arduous work will not be done,  
Till thou hast gained thy crown."

## VII.

### “A Ransom for All”

—1 Tim. 2: 4-6.—

**F**ROM earliest times to the present day, the necessity of sacrifice of life for expiatory purposes has persisted as an idea in the human mind. This necessity was illustrated at the first by the coats of skins which the Lord God made for Adam and Eve after sentence had been pronounced on account of their sin. That incident should convey the thought of a victim, and that the sinner was not himself able to make the necessary provision. It should also teach us that just as the Lord God provided the victims whose skins were made into robes for the sinners, so He would, and He only could, in due time provide the necessary sacrifice that would actually supply the needed covering, and would expiate the sin. In a word, the incident in the Garden illustrated the love of God for the guilty pair, and foreshadowed its grander manifestation to be made in “the fullness of time” on behalf of them and all their race.—Gen. 3:21; John 3:16; Gal. 4: 4, 5.

The extent of the ignorance of and alienation from God of the race is shown in the fact that most of the tribes of men are worshippers of demons or idols, not knowing the true God. As the divine likeness in them has been more and more obliterated, notions of cruelty and vindictiveness, on the part of their deities, have been introduced into their religions in connection with the still persisting idea of the necessity of expiation, in order to atonement. The fact that the sinner could not himself provide the victim, but that it must be provided by God, has been quite lost sight of. Thus the teaching concerning the relationship of the creature to the Creator has been so distorted that it might be said of some that their gods have been made by men. Even Christendom has not escaped the bane, as is evidenced by the vindictiveness of character often ascribed to the Almighty.

Doubtless Justice must be exact and stern; but it can be both without being vindictive; in fact, vindictiveness is a beginning of injustice, for it leads to excess. On the other hand, a loving provision for the exact satisfaction of the divine penalty against the sinner is quite compatible with justice; it magnifies the divine honour, exhibits the love of both God and Christ for a lost world, and lays the foundation for a substantial benefit, which in due course will accrue to all who desire to avail themselves of it. The teaching of Scripture on this most important subject is both harmonious and convincing.

### **The Sin**

When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden which God had planted "eastward in Eden," they were

perfect of their kind; "very good" was the word used to describe them. (Gen. 2: 8; 1: 31.) Man's estate is not the highest in the universe. There are at least two above him—the divine and the angelic. If there be grades between the angelic and the divine nature we know not; but the angelic nature is doubtless the lowest plane of spiritual nature, for of the man it is said, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." (Psalm 8: 5.) Man was made for an earthly habitation, and the restitution processes will bring back all the willing and obedient to the perfection originally illustrated in Edenic conditions. Angels are heavenly beings, differently constituted from mankind, and dwelling in other conditions.—Psalm 115: 16; Dan. 9: 20, 21; Matt. 18: 10; Mark 12: 25.

Such an one, "a little lower than the angels," but perfect on his own plane, was our father Adam, when placed by his Maker in the garden. Being without experience, and, therefore, without established character, though their physical and mental processes were perfect, he and his beautiful companion were placed under a command which was to test their obedience and loyalty to their Creator. The point of the test was a very small one, being merely the abstinence from the fruit of a certain tree, the lack of which would in no way have interfered with their sustenance. As no law is of force unless a penalty be arranged for infractions, so a penalty was provided in case of disobedience to this command. And just here is a difficulty to some, that the penalty arranged for seems out of all proportion to the insignificance of the offence to be punished. Men were hung in England for sheep-stealing, when

sheep were sold for 2d. each, and a Bible cost £40. But such penalties are now abolished, and capital punishment is pronounced only for a few offences, considered very heinous. In the Garden of Eden, however, we find capital punishment the penalty for eating a little fruit! If it be inquired, Why was this? the answer is that the value of the fruit was not at all the consideration, but the loyalty of the creature to the Creator. It must not be overlooked that the smaller and less significant the incident, the more severe is it as a test of loyalty; whence the principle enunciated by the Saviour, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much," (Luke 16: 10.) God had a right to require perfect obedience from His creature, man, and to declare that the disobedient should not be allowed to live.

### **The Penalty**

This is very different from the usual misunderstanding of the penalty threatened and pronounced in the Garden. Many think that God meant to torture the transgressors to all eternity. Had He so intended, He would certainly have stated it in the plainest terms, under which no misunderstanding could have been possible. Considering the issues involved, nothing less than the clearest possible expression of His intention could be justified by Him Who is the embodiment of Justice, not to mention Love.

Perusal of the first three chapters of Genesis reveals not a word that could be construed as implying an eternity of pain as the threatened penalty for disobedience. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and



evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die." (Gen. 2: 17, margin.) This is the only record of God's words to Adam on this subject before he sinned, and here should be found the straightforward teaching of eternal torture, had that been the penalty of disobedience. But God said nothing about it; instead of saying that Adam should expect to be kept alive in pain, He said that the transgressor should die. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "the wages of sin is death."—Ezek. 18: 4; Rom. 6. 23.

Some have found difficulty in understanding how Adam died *in the day* he ate the forbidden fruit. He did not die within twenty-four hours of his sin, for we read in Gen. 5: 5, "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died." This difficulty is more apparent than real, and it resolves itself when the wide use of the word "day" is recalled. We speak of "our day," not meaning a period of twenty-four hours, but a number of years. This usage is common in the Bible; two instances will suffice for the present. "Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the *day* of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works *forty years*." (Heb. 3: 8, 9.) "But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (2 Pet. 3: 8; Psa. 90: 4.) When these and similar references are considered, it is not at all difficult to understand that Adam died within the *day* that

he sinned. The dying process began promptly, and it was completed in less than a thousand years.

If the words threatening the penalty say nothing about eternal torment, much less do those in which the sentence was pronounced and more fully explained after the transgression. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken (Gen. 2: 7); for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 19.) This language is very precise. None need mistake its meaning. The sinful man was to return to the ground from which he had been taken. Did Adam, when God formed him "of the dust of the ground," emerge from a condition of misery and woe unspeakable? Let those answer who believe that "*return* unto the ground" means eternal torment.

The language describing the execution of the sentence is equally clear, allowing no room for the thought that eternal torment was intended to be understood. "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." (Gen. 3: 22, 23.) Here is the best possible evidence that the penalty was not to be a perpetuation of existence in misery, but rather a taking away of all power to live, as indicated in the act of excluding the man from the Garden where the trees were, the eating of whose fruits would have kept him alive. In order that the sinner might *die*, he was driven forth into the unprepared portion of the earth, to struggle on as best he might with the

thorns and thistles—which have remained and multiplied to this day, but which, with all other unfit conditions, shall be eradicated during the Kingdom Age—until, near the close of his “day,” the execution of the sentence was finished, and he returned to his dust. Had he not sinned, he would have been permitted to live on.

### **“Many Made Sinners”**

The sentence thus pronounced and executed has become the inheritance of the sinner's posterity. Certain it is, we all die; and the Bible furnishes the only reasonable account why this is so. Many Christians, instead of recognising death as the wages of sin, look upon it as the gateway to glory. This is a great mistake, and has contributed much to the prevalent confusion. The Apostle explains, “As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, . . . so death passed upon all men.” And again, “In Adam all die,” and “by a man came death.” (Rom. 5: 12; 1 Cor. 15: 21—Rotherham—22.) The whole of the race has entered into the results of Adam's transgression, as it is written, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.” (Ezek. 18: 2.) No other explanation than that of God's Word suffices to tell why infants die. These do not bring death upon themselves, because they know not right from wrong. Yet they die. It must be as the Scripture says, that by “one man sin entered and death by sin.” What is true of the infant is true also of the youth, of the middle-aged and of the old; all die because of the legacy of death bequeathed to them by our first parents. All are born dying, not living,

and the whole of what we call life is but a process of decay, arrested temporarily by such expedients as man can devise. This is the "broad road" to destruction, down which the entire race of Adam is hastening with ever-increasing velocity. Adam completed the journey in nine hundred and thirty years; the present average length of life is only thirty-five years.

Why did God so arrange that the penalty of Adam's sin should descend to some twenty-seven thousand millions who did not enjoy the privileges of perfection and favourable environment that he had? Does it not seem unjust that such a vast multitude should, without being consulted, and without power to avoid it, enter into a curse which they did nothing to bring upon themselves? Is there any wisdom in it? Before mentioning what seems to be the Scriptural answer to these urgent and reasonable questions it might well be asked whether it is at all likely that we, in Adam's position, would have done better than he did. Let each one carefully think it out for himself, and the conclusion must be that the most of us, if not all, would have done precisely what our progenitors in the garden of Eden did, circumstances being the same. It cannot, therefore, be alleged that God was unreasonable in not giving us an experience exactly like that of our first parents. And when the arrangements made for atonement for sin are comprehended, it will be clear that the course God took was not only reasonable, but was the most advantageous for the human race.

### **All the World Guilty Before God**

Divine Justice requires the punishment of disobedience, and cannot allow the guilty to be cleared.

(Exodus 34: 6, 7; Rom. 3: 19.) This is the basis of God's dealings; "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne." (Psa. 89: 14; 97: 2.) He is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1: 17; Numbers 23: 19.) This inflexibility of purpose is the guarantee of God's reliability and of the steadfastness of His decrees. Did we not have some assurance on this point we could not feel sure of anything. If God, after condemning Adam, had been brought to acknowledge that He had been unjust, what assurance could there be that He might not be unjust again? Divine Justice may seem severe at times, but its supremacy is the guarantee of stability for the universe.

The Omniscient foresaw the difficulty into which the entire race would be plunged by the transgression of the first man, and before even creating the man He had the relief measures fully arranged. One can fancy the attributes of the divine character harmoniously co-operating to devise the plan, Wisdom showing the way in which the interests of both Love and Justice would be fully served by meeting the requirements of the latter, and giving full exercise to the former, not only making plain the way by which the race might be blest, but also giving Love the opportunity to exercise itself all the more by providing the sacrifice—a corresponding price which alone could satisfy the righteous claim of divine Justice.

And what would be a corresponding price? A corresponding price would be the substitution of life for life, and whereas nothing more could be de-

manded, nothing less would be satisfactory. Twenty-seven thousand millions! Where shall we find so many? Where shall we find even one? Since all the race was condemned, "none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psa. 49: 7.) Shall we create other twenty-seven thousand millions, and ask them to lay down their lives for the condemned ones? Divine Wisdom would not agree to such use of Divine Power, since the newly created ones would in all probability have taken the same course as Adam did, and the difficulty would thus have been increased. Divine Love would have been in despair had not Wisdom shown the way by pointing out that the whole race was condemned on account of *one man's* sin, his posterity in his loins at the time of the transgression sharing therefore in the sin and its penalty. If a man of perfect righteousness could be found, willing to give up his life, as a sacrifice, Justice could accept that as full satisfaction, because this man would also be giving up the life of a possible bride and race which in the ordinary course of events might have been developed from him as from the first man.

But where was such a man? No member of Adam's race could meet the requirements, and there could be no assurance that another inexperienced, newly created man, such as Adam was, would not have followed his way of sin.

### **Bought with a Price**

The Son of God shared the Father's love for and interest in the race, and when Divine Wisdom pointed

out that He might become the Man required, and might, by giving up His life and that of His possible posterity, thus supply the Ransom which Divine Justice required, He at once agreed to make the sacrifice. Here was one of experience, better fitted than any other of the heavenly host, by reason of acquaintance with the Father, to carry out this portion of the Plan devised by Wisdom. He had been with the Father from the beginning; He had been the Father's right hand in the creation of all things; without Him was not anything made that was made; He was Himself "a God." (John 1: 1; literal rendering.) But He was not a man; how could He be a ransom, or corresponding price? In the glory of His pre-human state He would be far in excess of the value required, and divine Justice, which could not be satisfied with less, could not demand more.

He could be satisfactory to Justice only by leaving the heavenly glory and becoming a man; then He would be able to offer a ransom, or price to correspond.\* Could divine Power accomplish such a wonderful change of nature, as to transfer Him from heavenly to

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\*The word "ransom" occurs but three times in the New Testament—Matt. 20: 28; Mark 10: 45; 1 Tim. 2: 6. It is in each case a translation of the Greek *lutron*, meaning a redemption price, joined with *anti*, indicating correspondence—"a corresponding price." Thus is indicated the strictness of divine justice. The word "ransom" is used in Hos. 13: 14 and Isa. 35: 10 to translate the Hebrew *padah*, which has more the sense of release or deliver. This translation is not quite accurate, as the release or deliverance is not the ransom, but is the consequence of the ransom.

earthly conditions? Yes; divine Power could do this.\* And so it came to pass that He Who was in a form like God's form, and Who counted not that equality with God was a thing to be grasped (Phil. 2: 6, R.V.), "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." He became a member of the Jewish "house of servants," being born under the Law. The blood of bulls and goats, not being a corresponding price, could never take away sin; and the life of a heavenly being could not have been a proper price; one was not valuable enough, the other would have been too valuable. Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body didst thou prepare for Me. . . . We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."—Heb. 10: 5, 10; John 6: 51-58.

"One in a certain place testified, saying, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him or the Son of Man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Thus is described the glory and perfection of the first man. The entrance of sin made a great change, so that the Apostle says, "We see not yet all

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\*It is not supposed that the divine Attributes, Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power actually engaged in a colloquy as above described. This is merely a free parabolic form of description of the harmonious co-operation of those grand attributes in inspiring, devising, sanctioning, and executing the wonderful plan, determined on from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 5: 6; 13: 8.



things put under him. But we see *Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2: 6-9.) Could the ransom be more plainly described than is here done? Adam, crowned with the glory of perfect humanity, a little lower than the angels, and with the honour of being ruler over the works of God's hands, loses all by reason of sin, and his posterity shares the loss. Jesus, a heavenly being, the Creator of angels and men, divests Himself of His glory, and takes instead the glory and honour of perfect humanity; in a word, He also is made "a little lower than the angels," as the Apostle says. He takes this lower position for a purpose which is so definitely expressed that there is no room to question it—"Jesus, . . . made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, . . . that He by the grace of God should *taste death for every man*."

### **The Corresponding Price a "Touchstone"**

This makes several questions quite clear. It shows that our blessed Redeemer was *really* a man. He had to be such, in order to present a satisfactory price to divine Justice. He was not "the God-man." Such an expression is foreign to the Scripture. Neither is He described as "God the Son," though He is "the Son of God." It was as the MAN, Christ Jesus, that He "gave *Himself* a ransom [corresponding price] for all." Now it can be understood that His temptations were real, that His prayers to God were more than formalities, and that He really gave up His all for us,

trusting the Father to raise him from death. Now it is plain that in giving up Himself He was giving up the companion who might have been formed from and for Him, as Eve was formed for Adam, and the race which might thus have been developed, so supplying a price to correspond with every requirement of Justice. "To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—Rom. 14: 9; 1 John 2: 2.

By reason of a clear view of the Ransom, and what it required, we can also understand that the Wages of Sin is not life in misery, but is the taking away of all life, in death. If the Son of God had to leave the heavenly glory, in order that He might correspond in nature and perfection to the first man, whose race He was to redeem, it must be that divine Justice would be equally scrupulous concerning the penalty He was to pay for us. Scripture is explicit on this point. If the original transgressor was told he should *die* if he sinned, we are instructed that the very first article of the Christian faith is that "Christ *died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15: 3.) If death meant eternal torment in Adam's case, it could signify nothing less for Jesus, the Substitute. If eternal torment is the wages of our sins, if the iniquity of us all has been laid upon Him, and if He bare our sins in His own body to the tree, must not Jesus now be suffering eternal torment? (Isa. 53: 6; 1 Peter 2: 24.) The case is plain: If eternal torment is the penalty for our sins, and Jesus is not suffering it,

we are not redeemed; no corresponding price has been paid to divine Justice, and we can look forward to nothing but unspeakable woe to all eternity.

But we *are* redeemed; we *are* "bought with a price," even "the precious blood of Christ." He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. This being so, eternal torment cannot be the penalty for our sins, because our Redeemer, who "bare them in His own body," is not suffering eternal woe. He tasted *death* for every man, and the evidence that His sacrifice was satisfactory is in that He was raised from the dead by the power of the Father.\* (Eph. 1: 18, 19; Acts, 2: 24.) Let those who believe in eternal torment ask themselves the solemn question, "Has a ransom, a propitiation, a corresponding price, a satisfaction, ever been offered for what is due on account of my sins?"

Since the Scripture teaching on the Ransom makes clear so much that before was not so, it is not surprising that William Tyndale, the great Reformer, said that the doctrine of the Ransom is the "touchstone to try all teachings." A few illustrations of the Ransom teaching as a "touchstone" have been given. The student will at discretion apply this "stone" to other religious or so-called Bible teachings. Whatever he finds out of harmony with the Ransom is to be rejected forthwith; time spent with it is wasted. Although there may be beautiful thoughts expressed by some who openly or covertly deny the Ransom, we are not to go

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\*In John 10: 18 the word "take" should be "receive," as in the last sentence—"I have power to lay it down, and I have power to *receive* it again. This commandment have I *receive* of My Father."

through their error for the sake of a few good things which, by the grace of God, we can get from His Word, without coming in contact with the false teaching.

But some one will say that the Apostle commands us to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thes. 5: 21.) It cannot be that the Apostle means that God's people are to undertake to acquaint themselves with all the details of all the religious teaching in the world. Life is too short for this. He Himself wrote that there was one foundation, Christ, and other foundation can no man lay. If a teaching be presented for our consideration, we are not to shut our eyes and ears, and, as it were, run away from it without knowing what it is. We are to prove it; and the first question will be, Does it agree with the one foundation, the fact that Jesus "gave Himself a ransom for all?" If it do not agree, even though the words "ransom" and "propitiation" be frequently employed, the task of proving it is finished—perhaps in one minute—and our obligation toward it is discharged in full. If it be found to be harmonious with the Ransom, it will be right for us to examine it more closely, and derive whatever blessing we may from its presentations.

The Ransom as a "touchstone" will not only be a test of all teaching brought to it, but it may also be a test of the student, in that some long cherished beliefs may be found to be inconsistent with the faith in the Ransom. Happy will he be to whom the "touchstone" does not become a "stumbling stone and rock of offence," as it was to the Jews, and is now to a large number in Christendom.—1 Cor. 1: 23; 1 Pet. 2: 8.

### **The Lord of All.**

The Ransomer, raised from the dead, is no longer "a little lower than the angels;" that is to say, he is no longer a human being. Another change has occurred. He is now "far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." On account of His obedience unto the death of the cross, "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth." He has been raised from the dead "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," being now the exact image of the Father's person.—Eph. 2: 20, 21; Phil. 2: 8-10; 1 Peter 1: 4; Heb. 1: 3.

While He was the man, Christ Jesus, He was not a combination of two natures. Had He been that, He would not have been a "corresponding price," because Adam was not a combination of two natures. Yet, as a man, He had the benefit of His experience and knowledge acquired in heaven, and of this the prophet was inspired to write, "by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53: 11.) Since His resurrection our Lord is not a combination of two natures. Nevertheless, the memory of His experiences on earth is still of value to Him, and to us; "for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4: 15.

The risen Jesus is not only the merciful and faithful High Priest for His people; He is also the *Lord*, with all authority in heaven and in earth. (Rom. 14: 9; Matt. 28: 18.) He is priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. (Heb. 7: 1, 7.) He is the King of kings and Lord of lords; and while other lords and potentates of earth have reigned for a time, and have then been obliged by death to lay aside their sceptres, the Redeemer of the world is the only potentate of earth that has immortality, and is at the same time a priest "after the power of an endless life." (1 Tim. 6: 16; Heb. 7: 16.) God gave Him immortality: "As the Father hath life in Himself, so *hath He given* to the Son to have life in Himself." This was given Him at His resurrection. It could not have been before, else He could not have died, hence could not have given the *corresponding price* required by Justice. But since His resurrection, He is the image of the Father's person, a partaker of the divine nature. And this is the prize held before those who faithfully follow in His steps—"glory, honour and immortality," joint heirship with Him Whom the Father has appointed heir of all things. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."—Heb. 1: 3; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Rom. 2: 7; 8: 17; Heb. 1: 2; 1 John 3: 1, 2.

### "As He Is"

The last words come with special force from John, the beloved disciple, who enjoyed greater intimacy than

any of the others with the Lord. He says, "We shall be like Him;" but, while we rejoice in this, we cannot tell what it means, "for it doth not yet appear what we shall be." However, "we shall see Him *as He is*." All this shows plainly that "as He is" is very different from "as He was." If He were still a being of flesh, only somewhat more glorious than He was while on earth, the beloved Apostle could not have used such expressions. His language also reminds us of the several appearances of our Lord to the disciples after His resurrection. If John, who witnessed several of these appearances, could say, after fifty years, that he had not seen Jesus "as He is," therefore, although we expect to be like Him, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, it obliges us to acknowledge that by the several appearances which our Lord made to His disciples during the forty days after His resurrection He did not exhibit to them His glorious Person, partaking of the divine glory, but, as all spirit beings could do (except those bound in chains of darkness—Jude 6), He assumed fleshly bodies temporarily, when He desired to manifest Himself to their sight or touch. The bodies thus assumed were dissolved when the purpose of assumption had been accomplished.—Gen. 18: 1-22; 19: 1, 10-16; Judges 13: 2-21.

Careful perusal of the accounts of our risen Lord's manifestations of Himself show that He was not, as a rule, recognised by the sight of the eye, but by something He said or did, thus showing that the bodies assumed were not the same in each case, and sustaining the Apostle's thought that they had not seen Jesus "as He is." By these appearances the disciples were

able to realise that Jesus was no longer a man, but was now a spirit. And being filled with the thought that a man could not survive the sight of a spirit (Judges 13: 21, 22), they were on one occasion much affrighted. (Luke 24: 36-43.) But the Lord comforted them, and gave them to understand that what they had seen was not spirit, but flesh. A spirit is not composed of flesh and bones, as they saw Him having at that time. Yet John's word that he had not seen Jesus "as He is" obliges us to believe that the fleshly bodies in which our Lord manifested Himself to them were not His proper body. When such an one as John writes after this manner, we must needs abide by his word.

Saul of Tarsus came nearest of any to viewing our Lord's glory. This happened on the road to Damascus, and he was stricken with blindness by the brightness. His reference to the incident is striking. "Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (1 Cor. 15: 8.) The intimation is that as Jesus, since His resurrection, is "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen or can see," the vision which he had of the divine glory of Jesus was sent upon him before he was prepared for it. Here again John's words help us, also Paul's: "We shall be *like Him*; for we shall see Him *as He is*." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; . . . we shall all be changed; as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15: 50, 51, 49.) And the words of the Saviour to Nicodemus give the same teaching of the difference between human and spiritual natures, showing that the two are not asso-



ciated, but are forever kept separate and distinct. "That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit *is spirit*." (John 3: 6.) We, at the present time, are flesh, because we have been born of the flesh. If we follow the way of faith and consecration, the high calling open during the Gospel Age, we shall be born of the Spirit, and shall then no more be flesh, but shall be spirit beings, joint heirs of the heavenly inheritance. Our Lord was born of the flesh for the purpose of giving the Ransom; at His resurrection, He was born of the Spirit (1 Pet. 3: 18, marginal reading), and is no longer flesh, as John intimates. After His resurrection He could and did come and go as the wind, invisible to His disciples and others, except when He chose to manifest Himself. So shall the members of His Body be, when born of the Spirit. (John 3: 8.) The Scriptures use the figure of the natural birth to illustrate two distinct spiritual truths: (1) The re-generation or present experience of the Child of God, and (2) the resurrection change or birth. The Christian life is illustrated by the infantile state, by childhood and by maturity. 1 Pet. 1: 23 speaks of the believer as "born again," as a result of the operation of the Word of God, he having been previously dead in trespasses and sins; and 1 Pet. 2: 2 describes the necessary food to be the same Word of God. John speaks of "young men," "fathers," and "little children." But from the standpoint of John 3: 3-8, the idea is the birth of the resurrection, for only then will the believer have experienced that change of physical ability which will enable him to transport himself invisibly. Our Lord

entered a room after His resurrection, "the doors being shut"; and anyone born of the Spirit should be able similarly to come and go like the wind.

### **He Shall be Satisfied**

The man Christ Jesus had no posterity, so that it is written of Him, "who shall declare His generation?" The risen Lord is to have not only a "Bride," but much posterity, neither developed after the manner of the flesh, but both taken from among those whom He has bought with the "corresponding price." All of those who once were children of Adam I., who did not prior to the Kingdom Age have the full opportunity for salvation according to special offers, shall have the opportunity to become children of Adam II., "the Lord from heaven." If they by faith accept Him as their Redeemer, and acknowledge and obey Him as "the everlasting Father," He will accept them as His children, and will bless them. And so, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.—Isa. 53: 8, 11; 1 Cor. 15: 45, 47; Isa. 9: 6.

It cannot be supposed that our Lord would be "satisfied" with small results of the "travail of His soul," or that divine Wisdom would have arranged such a plan of a Ransom and of Restitution blessings to follow it, unless there had been in the divine foreknowledge of events such a view of results as would justify the outlay. It may therefore be understood that the permanent results of the Ransom will be in every way worthy of the Father who devised it, and satisfactory to the Son who executed it, and brings it to its glorious consummation. Some there will be in the Kingdom Age, who, after enjoying all the favours of light and know-

ledge, will be ungrateful and disobedient. Such will not be allowed to live forever, but after their incorrigibility and hardness of heart are fully demonstrated, they will be destroyed in the Second Death from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, and will be heard of no more forever.—2 Thess. 1: 9; Acts 3: 23; Rev. 20: 7-10.

The study of the Scripture teaching on the Ransom has, it is hoped, resulted in a clearer view than ever of the harmony of the divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. It has also shown us that God, Who required an atonement sacrifice, provided it; had He not done so, the race must still be unredeemed. This study has delivered us, we trust, from any thoughts we may have had of vindictiveness on God's part, and has enabled us to recognise Him as the God of love and mercy.

“God so Loved the World,  
That He gave His only begotten Son,  
That Whosoever believeth in Him  
Should not Perish,  
But have Everlasting Life,”

—John 3: 16, 36; 1 John 3: 11, 12.—

**Rock of Ages**

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure;  
Save me from its guilt and power.

Not the labour of my hands  
Can fulfil Thy laws demands.  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
All for sin could not atone:  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyes shall close in death,

\* \* \*

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

*A. Toplady.*

## VIII.

# Shadows of Calvary

**T**HE DIVINE WORD, as already noted, expresses much of its teaching in symbolic language, such as parables and figuratively expressed prophecies. But, besides these, there is a deal of typical incident and arrangement intended to assist God's people to a better understanding of His purposes. That is, certain persons and companies of persons have been caused to do various actions illustrative of God's dealings in respect to the promised salvation from sin, though the typical arrangements thus carried out were not in themselves able actually to take away sins, but rather by their constant repetition showed their inability to do this.

Many persons were used as types; even some not recognised as God's people, as Nebuchadnezzar, seem to have been used. (Daniel 4.) It is not wise, however, to suppose that every incident and personage in the Old Testament and New was in some sense typical of greater things to come. The safe way is to seek what the inspired writers of the Scriptures were instructed to set forth as typical, and to base our thoughts on that information.

## Israel as a Type

God used Israel very much in this illustrative manner, and a very elaborate system of types is found in their arrangements and ceremonies under the Mosaic Law. Some of their experiences and the purport of them are referred to in 1 Cor. 10: 10. "All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." That is to say, we may hope to get from these types more actual instruction and benefit than did the participators in the typical incidents. Yet types are never to be considered illustrations of doctrine without the sanction of plain statements of Scripture; and whoever bases a teaching on an interpretation of a type that is not authorised by the Word prepares for himself confusion of face. As William Tyndale wrote, centuries ago, in his quaint language:

"Allegory proveth nothing, neither can do. For it is not the Scripture, but an ensample or similitude borrowed of [by the?] Scripture, to declare a text or a conclusion of the Scripture more expressly, and to root it and grave it in the heart. For a similitude or an ensample doth print a thing much deeper in the wits of a man than doth a plain speaking, and leaveth behind him [it] as it were a sting to prick him forward and to awake him withal. Moreover, if I could not prove with an open text that which the allegory doth express, then were the allegory a thing to be jested at, and of no greater value than a tale of Robin Hood." "In many places, where the text seemeth at the first chop hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and *often reading together*, make it plain enough."—Biography, by Demaus, pp. 198, 363.

In his "Preface to Leviticus," Tyndale wrote, "We had need to take heed everywhere that we be not beguiled with false allegories, whether they be drawn out of the New Testament or the Old, . . . but namely [especially] in this book [Pentateuch]. *Here*, a man had need to put on all his spectacles, and to arm himself against invisible spirits. . . . Beware of allegories; for there is not a more handsome or apt thing to beguile withal than an allegory; nor a more subtle and pestilent thing in the world to persuade a false matter, than an allegory. And, contrariwise, there is not a better, vehementer, or mightier thing to make a man understand withal, than an allegory. For allegories make a man quick-witted and print [imprint] wisdom in him, and make it to abide where bare words go but in at one ear, and out at the other."—Demaus, pp. 230-232.

### **The Shadow**

Our Lord's sacrifice in various aspects was represented in the typical sacrifices offered for Israel, the typical people. He was foreshadowed by the Passover Lamb, and so accurately did He fulfil this type that He died on the very day of the sacrifice of the Passover. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." His sacrifice was also foreshadowed by the Atonement Day offerings for sin, and so accurately did He fulfil this type that the beginning of His ministry, when He presented Himself as a sacrifice (Heb. 10: 5-10), was at or about the time of the offering of the typical Atonement Day sacrifices.\*

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\*It is not stated in so many words that our Lord's ministry began at the Atonement Day time; but if He was "cut off" in the midst of the week of years, His ministry was of three-and-a-half years' duration. Counting back from the Passover,

The sin offerings of the typical Day of Atonement are fully described in Leviticus 16. A bullock was slain; portions of the carcase were burnt on the altar in the court of the Tabernacle, and some of the blood was carried into the Holiest, and was sprinkled upon and before the mercy-seat where the divine Presence was represented by the supernatural light. The remainder of the carcase, with the hide, hoofs, etc., was burned outside the camp, the body of the bullock being thus completely destroyed. Two goats were presented before the Lord at the gate of the Court. One was chosen by lot, and was dealt with in precisely the same manner as the bullock had been before it. Some of the blood of the bullock and of the goat was put upon the altar in the court to cleanse it. The bullock was for the sins of the priest and his house; the goat was for the sins of the people; that is, the other eleven tribes. The second goat was called a "scapegoat." Over it the high priest confessed "all the sins of the children of Israel," and then sent it away by the hand of a "fit man" ("a man that is in readiness"—R.V.) into the wilderness. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited"; that is,

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when He died, this length of time would bring us to the Atonement season, as the time of year when His ministry began. Thus is our Redeemer's death, which began when He presented Himself, and was "finished" three-and-a-half years later on Calvary, beautifully identified with both the great sacrifices which particularly typified it.



a region "cut off," whence it would not readily find its way back.\*

After completing the sacrifices, the typical High Priest donned his garments of glory and beauty, and came forth to pronounce the blessing upon the waiting people, thus reinstating them for another year in the divine favour. These ceremonial sacrifices and blessings were repeated "year after year continually."

### **The Substance**

Concerning the actual atonement for the sins of the whole world, we are informed that through our Lord Jesus Christ "we have now received the atonement"; "and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (Rom. 5: 11; 1 John 2: 2.) These statements are plain and clear, and if we were left without

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\*According to Nevin's "Biblical Antiquities," the total number of sacrifices offered yearly, in the stated services of the sanctuary for the whole congregation of Israel, was 114 bullocks, 40 rams, 1103 lambs, and 32 goats. To these must be added the probably far larger numbers of various animals which were brought by individuals as peace-, thank- and trespass-offerings. Present day sceptics look back at this with disgust; for them the law is "turned to blood," and it is abhorred by them. They forget that few of these animals were totally destroyed in the ceremonies; most of them were eaten by the priests who did the service (Lev. 6: 24-30), and they were thus provided with a portion of their food. The voluntary offerings were mostly eaten by the donors thereof. Would not those who look upon the Law with disgust on account of its sacrifices do well to consider the economy of administration thus arranged?

specific information as to the interpretation of the typical sacrifices, it would be our duty to explain them in harmony with the teaching of these plain statements, which can be reinforced by many others. But God's Spirit has not left His people without help in respect to these things, for the bullock and the two goats of the ceremonial Day of Atonement are clearly referred to in Scripture, and the explanations there presented are to be received as given by authority.

One of these explanations is given in Heb. 7: 26, 27. Here our Lord is referred to as the great High Priest, not according to the Aaronic order under the Law Covenant, but according to the order of Melchisedec, under a New Covenant. (Vss. 12-14.) He is Priest "after the power of an endless life"; and inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest, by so much was Jesus made surety of a better covenant," that is, the New Covenant. (Vss. 16, 20, 22.) Then, referring to the typical Atonement sacrifices, the Apostle explains that Jesus, our High Priest, has not the daily or continuous need "to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins and then for the people's," as those high priests did annually on the Day of Atonement, "for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." (Vs. 27.) Being Himself the sacrifice, it is manifest that our Lord did not require an offering to be made for Himself; but those who were to become members of His "house" (Heb. 3: 1, 6) required an offering to be made for their transgressions, just as Aaron's house required an offering on account of its sins.

The text in Heb. 7: 27 is very explicit. It refers to the typical atonement sacrifice in both its parts, and then in no uncertain words, describes their antitype, telling what was done, who did it, when it was done, and what it was that was represented by the bullock and the goat; *"this He did once, when He offered up Himself."* Analyse these last words, comparing them with that which they explain, and note the explicitness with which the Apostle states himself on this subject.

"THIS"—Offering sacrifice for His house and for the people—for the Church and for the whole world.

"HE"—Jesus, Himself, our High Priest.

"DID"—Past tense; action completed some time before A.D. 64, when the Book of Hebrews is supposed to have been written.

"ONCE"—Once for all, no repetition required.

"WHEN HE OFFERED UP HIMSELF"—  
No supplements or additions required.

He is Himself the "Ransom for All," and is the antitype in His own Person of the typical bullock and goat. It was "finished" on Calvary, as intimated by the miraculous rending of the temple vail at the time of our Lord's death, this showing that the typical usefulness of that veil and of the typical mercy-seat behind it were now past.

A further explanation is given in Heb. 9: 12, where the Apostle, again mentioning the blood of the typical goats and calves (bullocks), shows that the blood of

Christ, the High Priest, is the antitype of these, and that by it, He went into the Divine Presence, "having obtained eternal redemption." The words "for us," being in italics in the Authorised Version, were supplied by the translators, and were not in the original. They really impose a limitation not authorised by the preceding words or the explanation in Heb. 7: 27, where it is made plain that His sacrifice was not only "for us," Believers of the Gospel Age, but also for the whole world, typified by all the people, for whom the goat sacrifice was offered. . . .

In Heb. 9: 13, 14, reference is again made to the typical bullocks and goats, and to them are added the ashes of an heifer, used to accomplish the typical cleansing that might be required by individuals from time to time after the atonement for past sins has been made. The blood of Christ, *who offered Himself* (note again the past tense and the reference to Jesus' finished offering), is set forth as the *antitype* of all these; thus showing its efficacy not only to atone for past sins, but also to cleanse from present transgressions.—1 John 1: 7-9.

In Heb. 10: 1-4 is found another reference to the typical atonement offerings, and the impossibility of sin being removed by them. "Wherefore, when He [Jesus] cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared Me . . . Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.

. . . . This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. . . . By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10: 5-14.) Thus again is the one sacrifice of Jesus affirmed to be the antitype of both bullock and goat.

### **Sanctifying the People With His Own Blood**

In Heb. 13: 11, 12, the teaching is repeated, more emphatically, if possible, than before. "The bodies of those beasts [bulls and goats] whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. It has already been noted that the sacrifice offered "for the people" was a goat. In this passage, the Apostle refers to it direct—that He might sanctify the *people* with *His own* blood"—thus showing that Jesus is to be regarded as the antitype of the offering for the people. Again, as in Heb. 7: 27, is the action placed in the past tense, as referring to what He did—"suffered without the gate." This and the preceding references by the inspired writer to the typical sacrifices and their antitype are clear, plain and straightforward, leaving no doubt as to his meaning, and as to the mind of the Spirit that Jesus Himself should be regarded as the antitype of the several typical sacrifices for sin. Doubtless, this is why the reference to His one sacrifice is put in the plural, in Heb. 9: 23. Various phases and views of His one sacrifice were foreshadowed by the bullock,

the goat, the ashes of the heifer, and by other sacrifices, and from that standpoint each phase of the one sacrifice would be regarded as a separate and distinct sacrifice, though all were consummated at one time and in one person.

### **Bearing His Reproach**

In Heb. 13: 13-16, the Apostle speaks of us going forth to Jesus without the camp, to bear His reproach. Does this mean that we are to consider ourselves and our sacrifices (Rom. 12: 1) as sin offerings, as it were the goat following the bullock? It cannot mean this, for the goat sacrifice has already been referred to in verse 12 as having been fulfilled by Jesus. We are therefore effectually excluded from considering ourselves in such a light. That we are invited to follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer, suffering for righteousness' sake, is most plainly set forth in the Word of God. (1 Peter 2: 21-23; 4: 13-16.) And just here is the point of distinction that needs to be observed, if confusion is to be avoided, and we are not to be made ashamed. Our Lord's sufferings and death were (1) as a ransom for the sins of the whole world, the sin offering for His own house, and for all the people, as represented in the bullock and the goat (Heb. 7: 27; 13: 12; 1 John 2: 2); (2) for righteousness' sake, enduring much contradiction of sinners against Himself, ostracism, being cast out, etc. And it is written (Heb. 5: 8), "Though He were a son, yet *learned He obedience* by the things which He suffered." This second

aspect of His sufferings is left us for an *example*, that we should follow His steps, and let this mind be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus. To this aspect of His sufferings did our blessed Saviour refer when on several occasions He emphasised the necessity of taking up the cross to follow Him, and the further fact that if His name had been cast out as evil, His followers should expect their names to be similarly cast out. The reproaches heaped upon Jesus by a time-serving priesthood and people have been heaped upon His followers; as he suffered "outside," so have His followers been ostracised and persecuted for His Name's sake, and to this the Apostle refers in Heb. 13: 13. If Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered, let us also learn obedience by what we are graciously allowed to suffer with Him. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." To the extent that you are made partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; and glorify God on this behalf. As we bear His reproach, "by Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name." (Heb. 13: 13-16.) Let us then, with all our hearts, appreciate the exalted privilege of bearing the reproach of Jesus, in the hope that we shall in the end be made partakers of His glory. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2: 12.) If we be faithful, even unto death, we shall receive a crown of life.—2 Tim. 2: 11; Rev. 3: 21; 2: 10; Rom. 6: 5.

### **Jesus as the Scapegoat**

After the sacrifice of the bullock and goat, on the typical Day of Atonement, the high priest confessed the sins of the children of Israel, priests and people, over the head of the live goat, and sent him, thus laden, by the hand of a "man of opportunity" (marginal reading) into the wilderness, into a land "cut off," from which the goat would not readily find its way back. This is a manner of representing the bearing away of the sins atoned for by the bullock and goat, and its antitype must be sought in the Scriptures first of all. If no explanation be found there, one may be suggested from another source; but if the Scriptures give an explanation, it is to be accepted without reservation, and the student need seek no further. Fortunately, there are Scriptural allusions to this type, which beautifully explain it, and help us indeed to realise that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Rom. 15: 4.

In Isaiah 53: 6, it is written, "Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"; or, as the marginal reading puts it, "hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on Him." This is a prophecy concerning our Lord at His first advent, and the allusion to the type of the "scapegoat," upon which "all the iniquities of the children of Israel" were laid, is manifest.

In John 1: 29, are found the inspired words of John the Baptist, who, pointing to Jesus, said, "Behold the



Lamb of God, which beareth away [marginal reading] the sin of the world." This is another allusion to the "scapegoat" laden with the sins and transgressions of the children of Israel, typical of the whole world. An apparent difficulty arises from the use of the word "Lamb," whereas the typical animal that bore away the sins was a goat. Some have thought that John the Baptist alluded to the Passover Lamb, also a type of Jesus; but a moment's consideration will show that he could not have had the Passover Lamb in mind, as it was not a live animal, carrying away sins, but was slain. Moreover, the Passover Lamb was not a sin offering, therefore could not have been in John's mind in connection with the taking away of sins. The Passover Lamb was for food, to prepare the Israelites for the journey out of Egypt, and it is a representation of Christ dying to become spiritual food and sustenance for His people, as well as to provide the sprinkled blood for protection from the destroying wrath of God.\*

John the Baptist probably used the word "Lamb" in harmony with the well-known usage that lambs and kids were interchangeable for sacrificial purposes

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\*All this, and more, that is signified by the Passover Lamb—"Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us"—and reasons why His death should be remembered with the emblems of wine and unleavened bread annually on the anniversary of the institution of the last Supper, which was, by Jewish reckoning, the day of His death, is explained in other publications, obtainable from us. Write at once about these things!

under the Jewish law. (Exodus 12: 3-5; Lev. 5: 6.) It is also to be particularly noted that John spoke this testimony of Jesus at the beginning of Jesus' ministry; that is to say, about October, or the time of the Atonement Day. This being so, both he and his hearers would have in mind the goat being led away by the hand of a "fit man," and would understand that John's allusion to Jesus was in some sense to be connected with that typical ceremony. Having in mind the time of year, we must see that they could not have thought otherwise. John's words, therefore, come down to us as divinely provided assistance to the understanding of the type of the "scapegoat."

### **Bearing Away the Sins**

In 1 Peter 2: 24 is found a most beautiful allusion to the "scapegoat" type, as fulfilled by our blessed Redeemer. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." The reading of the margin makes this plainer than does the ordinary text—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body *to the tree*." Other translations of this text are:—

"Who His own self carried up our sins in His body to the tree.—*Revised Version, margin, Alford, De Wette, Huther.*

"Who carried up our sins Himself in His own body to the tree."—*Emphatic Diaglott.*

"Who our sins Himself bare up in His body unto the tree."—*J. B. Rotherham.*

"And He took away all our sins, and in His body lifted them to the cross."—*Syriac (Murdoch's).*

Could anything be more striking than these Scriptures, or more evidently intended "for our learning" in the study of these wonderful types? The "scape-goat" was led away by the hand of a fit man, or man of opportunity, in readiness for the work, to the uninhabited wilderness.

Our blessed Lord was led away by the Roman government, the "man of opportunity" for the occasion, the power of capital punishment having been taken from the Jews. He, carrying our sins—the sins of all mankind, past, present and future—was led to the land uninhabited, the wilderness of death; and as the goat would not easily have found its way back, so could our Redeemer not find His own way back, but He was raised from the dead by the power of God, His Father.—Acts 3: 15, 5: 30.

### **The Blessing from the High Priest**

At the close of the typical Day of Atonement, the typical high priest came forth to pronounce the blessing. So, after having fulfilled the types of bullock, Lord's goat and scapegoat, and having been raised by the Father to the condition typified by Aaron's garments of glory and beauty, Jesus has begun to give the blessing secured by His sacrifice. The first manifestation of this blessing was granted on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 33), and the same has continued throughout the Gospel Age to believers—to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. (Acts 3: 26; Rom. 1: 16.) As already noted, the same blessing of the Holy Spirit will continue on a larger

scale during the Kingdom Age, though as circumstances will then be much more favourable to right living than they are now, there will be no prize of glory, honour and immortality held before the people then, as there is now. The prize then will be restoration to perfection of human nature. But both blessings, present and future, are bestowed by the great High Priest because the sacrifice has been "finished." .....

Thanks be unto God for the Ransom, and also for the beautiful types of it which He has arranged for our instruction!

### **The Shining Light**

On the Christian's path a shining light appears,  
Growing bright and brighter with the passing years.  
'Tis the light of wisdom from the realms above  
Every day increasing, like God's gifts of love.

Though no eye hath seen, nor mortal ear hath heard  
All the grace and beauty found in God's pure Word;  
Yet His holy Spirit into truth will guide  
All the trusting ones who in His love abide.

There is nothing covered but shall be revealed,  
When the books are opened and the rolls unsealed;  
So we follow on, to know as we are known,  
Toward the perfect day when shadows will have flown.

*F. G. Burroughs.*

## IX.

### Salvation and the Covenants

**P**HILOSOPHY has at all times engaged the attention of man. The desire to know the ins and outs of various subjects, the reasons for this or that phenomenon and the principles governing various actions has kept busy all but the most limited intellects of humanity. Some have occupied themselves with minor questions; others have sought to solve immense problems; some have dealt only with affairs of the senses; others have endeavoured to explain the higher subjects of morality, life and death; but all have demonstrated the truth of the saying, "As a man thinketh, so is he."

The power of thought over the lives of men is universally recognised. Thoughts harboured express themselves in actions. Actions repeated form habits. Habits make up character. Character determines destiny. The beginning of all this, which has so widespread and enduring an influence, is in the mind. How important, therefore, that right thoughts on all subjects, particularly right thoughts about God, His Purpose and His Plan of Action, should be received and entertained by all Christians. These thoughts of Truth, derived from the Bible, are the power to transform and sanctify the Believer, causing the divine like-

ness to be more and more manifest in him, while the unbeliever, groping about in a benighted condition, appreciates not the divine likeness, and does not grow in it. How can he, being ignorant of it? It is surprising that the remnants of the divine image remaining in the hearts of various individuals have not been more marred than they are.—John 17: 17; Rom. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 18; 1 Cor. 1: 20, 21; Rom. 1: 20-22; Eph. 4: 17, 18.

Affecting eternal interests and the divine programme in respect to them, the subject of Salvation and the Covenants is worthy the most attentive consideration and painstaking inquiry. The result of such investigation, if conducted in submission to the Divine Spirit and Word, cannot be other than beneficial to him who seeks with the key of knowledge to unlock the treasures of wisdom.

### **Salvation**

In previous chapters the necessity for Salvation has been seen, also the fact that God has provided it, through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. All of Adam's descendants were involved by him in sin and death. The wisest and best of the race have made laws and suggested remedies, but have been unable to eradicate the disease nor to hinder its result. Nevertheless, the remedy has been arranged for by God, and eventually sin is to be eradicated, and death destroyed by Him who by the grace of God tasted death for every man. The opportunity to gain freedom from sin and everlasting life is to be presented to every child of

Adam, and only those who, after enlightenment, wilfully oppose the Lord will be destroyed in the Second Death.—Acts 3: 23.

The ultimate conditions of being to be enjoyed by those for whom Salvation from Sin and Death is provided, have been seen to be two; viz., the heavenly for those who, during the Gospel Age, believe in Jesus and follow in His footsteps of sacrifice, and the earthly for all other obedient ones, whether of the future age or of those ages preceding the Gospel Age. It has been clearly realised that while these two results of salvation are provided, the one condition of faith and implicit obedience—full consecration—is necessary to be observed in order to obtain either. The difference is not in the terms of salvation, but in the environment and time under which the faith is exercised and the obedience rendered.—Acts 3: 22; 2 Thes. 1: 9, 10; John 5: 22-24; Rom. 3: 22, 23, 26.

### **The Covenants**

A Covenant is an agreement or compact entered into by two or more persons. An agreement or contract usually consists of mutual promises to fulfil certain prescribed conditions in return for mutual concessions or benefits. Thus in a building contract or covenant one party promises to build a house according to certain plans and specifications, and the other party promises on the completion of the work, or at specified dates, to pay a certain amount of money.

Many covenants are mentioned in Scripture. When Noah and his sons emerged from the Ark, God established a covenant with them, that the earth should no

more be destroyed by a flood of waters. The rainbow was set as the token of this divine promise, which secures the earth as the everlasting home for all flesh, both man and beast. (Gen. 9: 8-17.) God made a covenant with David, that his house should be established forever. (2 Sam. 7: 15-29.) David had implicit faith in this promise, and in his last words referred to it as "all his desire." (2 Sam. 23: 5.) This covenant is elsewhere called "the sure mercies of David" (Psalm 89: 20-37; Isa. 55: 3; Acts 13: 34), inherited by David's Son and Lord, who has been raised from the dead, now no more to return unto corruption. Under Him, the rebuilding of the fallen "tabernacle of David" has been in progress during the Gospel Age, by the end of which it will be completed, in that the joint heirs will have been all gathered, and the fleshly house of Israel revived. Then all men shall have the opportunity to seek after the Lord. (Acts 15: 16, 17.) In the revival under King Josiah, he and his people entered into a covenant to observe faithfully all the requirements of the Law Covenant. (2 Kings 23: 2, 3.) Jehoiada, the priest, made a similar covenant at the accession of Joash. (2 Chron. 23: 16, 17.) The orderly succession of day and night is called a covenant of the Lord.—Jer. 33: 20-22.

The three Covenants which particularly have to do with the divine arrangement for Salvation from Sin and Death are now to be considered. The first of these was the promise made by God to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob, that his seed should be great, that he should possess the land of Palestine, and



that all families of the earth should be blessed in his seed. The condition of obedience was attached to this covenant (Gen. 12: 1-3; 13: 14-18; 18: 17-19; 22: 17, 18), it was confirmed after the manner usual in those times, circumcision was its sign or token (Gen. 15: 3-18; 17: 9-14, 23; Rom. 4: 11, 12), and it was further confirmed by an oath.—Gen. 22: 16-18; Heb. 6: 13-18.

The second great covenant was the Law Covenant. This was made between God and Israel over a sacrifice at Mount Sinai. Some of the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the Book of the Law, and some on the people, and so the bond was established. Moses had the honour of mediating this covenant between God and the children of Israel, and its Sabbaths were its sign or token.—Ex. 19: 1-8; 24: 1-8; 31: 12-17; Deut. 5: 12-15; Ezek. 20: 12, 20.

The third great covenant is styled the New Covenant. It is a better covenant than the Mosaic one, being instituted upon better promises. Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. His flesh is the sacrifice over which the New Covenant is ratified, and His blood is "the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. 9: 15; 8: 6; 12: 24.) It is a ministration of the Spirit, written on the believer's heart, not of the letter (i.e., not of the Law Covenant written on stones and in books—2 Cor. 3: 3, 6, 7); it has for its Sabbath the perpetual rest of faith in the finished work of Jesus, and its circumcision is that of the heart.—Heb. 4: 1, 9-11; Rom. 2: 29; Col. 2: 11.

The line of thought to be followed in our study concerning these covenants is that the Abrahamic Covenant is the expression of God's

purpose to bless all the families of the earth. The Law Covenant, while demonstrating the exceeding sinfulness of sin, was an attempt to develop a kingdom of priests, Jesus alone fulfilling the prescribed conditions. The New Covenant is the means by which is made possible the everlasting blessing of all the families of the earth, and the development of a Kingdom of Priests to be joint-heirs with Jesus.

### **The Abrahamic Covenant**

The particular covenant feature in which Abraham was concerned was that, if he would be obedient to God, the Seed should be born of his line. Abraham was obedient, and he secured the honour of having the Blessor in his line, as proposed. Note that Abraham's obedience did not secure a blessing for all the families of the earth. This had been determined and expressed long before (Gen. 3: 15), and Abraham's obedience or disobedience could not alter it, though he did by his faith and obedience secure for himself the honour of being the one in whose line the Blessor should come.

### **Jesus Christ**

#### **The Promised Seed**

It must always be remembered that the true "Seed" of Abraham, promised to him, was not Isaac, but Jesus. (Gal. 3: 16.) Considerable space in Matt. 1 and Luke 3 is used to give the genealogies that show (particularly that in Luke) our Lord to have been the descendant of Abraham, and of David, and therefore entitled to be considered the heir of the promises made to those worthies. But just as Isaac was obedient so was our Lord tried and tested that He might learn obedience. (Heb. 5: 8.) Isaac was received back from

the dead "in a figure"; our Lord actually died and was actually received back from the dead. (Heb. 11: 17-19.) Thus was shown the necessity for our Lord's death, before He, as the "Seed," could fully enter into His exalted office and begin the work of blessing, which He did on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 3: 25, 26.) Those blessed during the Gospel age have the additional privilege of following in His footsteps with a view to becoming joint heirs with Him of His glory, and with Him blessers of the remainder of the families of the earth in the Kingdom age. These, because associated with Him, have also the title, "Seed of Abraham.—Gal. 3: 29.

The Abrahamic Covenant may be considered in two parts; (1) *to* the Seed, (2) *through* the Seed. It contains in its specifications no provision for the eradication of sin and the destruction of death. As the associates of the "Seed" were to be chosen from the fallen race, some such provision would be absolutely necessary before the gracious design of the Lord could be accomplished. (Gal. 3: 16, 29.) The "Seed" must be prepared first. The Abrahamic Covenant did nothing more than to indicate that the "Seed" should be of Abraham's line. How it should be developed, and how it should get life, so that it might be a blessing indeed, was not expressed in the contract. Therefore, some other arrangement must be made, so that the promise to Abraham might become effective in both its parts; and at this point enters the Law Covenant, proposing to prepare the "Seed" for the great work.

## The Law Covenant

That this was one of the purposes of the Law Covenant is clearly stated in Exodus 19: 1-6. In fact, no other purpose was mentioned at the time save that of developing a nation of kings and priests by obedience to the Covenant then about to be made. Other ends served by the Law Covenant are elsewhere mentioned, but it is evident that this was the primary purpose. It transpired that during the Jewish age that nation had some kings and some priests. But this was not in fulfilment of Ex. 19: 6, which promised that the nation *as a whole* should be kings and priests, if obedient to the terms of the Covenant about to be made. Kings rule, and priests instruct and bless the people; so that this promise could mean nothing else than that the Law Covenant proposed to develop the Seed promised 430 years previously.

When the Law Covenant was mentioned to the people, they unanimously and most willingly entered into it. Moses was its Mediator\*, both in its negotiation and in its administration, in the primary sense of internunciator or messenger. When the people sinned, he exercised the office of mediator in the sense of reconciler, or intercessor. He pled their cause, acting as their advocate before God. At this time they were the Covenant people, the agreement having been made only a short while before their sin, which was the occasion of

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\*The word "Mediator" has two meanings, according to Dr. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, which thus defines the Greek word "Mesites," used in Gal. 3: 19—"a go-between; that is (simply) an internunciator, or (by implication) a reconciler (intercessor)."

Moses interceding for them. The two meanings of Mediator are clearly and beautifully represented in these two capacities in which Moses acted—first, as messenger on behalf of the parties to the Covenant; second, as Intercessor, on behalf of the transgressing party, that the Covenant just ratified might be allowed to go on, the people being forgiven their iniquity.—Exodus 19:1-8; 24:1-8; 32:30-32.

By what process did the Law Covenant—added to the Abrahamic—endeavour to develop the “Seed”? By obedience, as the people had agreed. (Deut. 6:17-25.) Commandments were given, ten of them written on the tables of stone and the remainder, equally important and moral, in books. These were to be scrupulously observed to the smallest detail. Not one jot or tittle was to fail, and life was the promised reward to the doer of the Law. (Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11; Gal. 3:12.) Life was the prime necessity; for without it the kings and priests which were to be could never accomplish the blessing of others. Moreover, if they who desired to be kings and priests were themselves sinners, not fit to be allowed to live, they would also be unfit for the exalted offices they sought, and could not be acceptable as the “Seed.” The standard must be perfection of holiness; anything less than this would leave the race in a perpetual state of unrest and turmoil. This standard was upheld by the “commandments, statutes and judgments” which the Lord commanded Israel, and they essayed to be obedient and thus prove themselves worthy of life, and to be the kings and priests, the “Seed” to bless all the families of the earth.

Penalties were provided for infractions of the Law. Some of these were against individual transgressors, while others were against the people collectively. As the reward of obedience was life, the penalty of disobedience was death, individually and nationally. (Lev. 23: 29, 30; 26: 14-20.) Yet if the chastisements upon the nation should move them to repentance, the Lord would not forsake them utterly, but in harmony with this Law Covenant, and in fulfilment of it, He would bring them back to their land again, even though their hopes had perished and become, as it were, a mass of dead bones.—Lev. 26: 38-46; Ezek. 37: 1-14.

#### **The Law Covenant— Weak Through the Flesh**

For sixteen centuries the Jews were allowed to try to prove their ability to keep the Law and gain the reward of life and glory. Sad experience proved to some few of them their inability and the fact that the Law ordained unto life was really a ministration of condemnation to them, and could never be anything else, because the Law was not suited to them nor were they suited to it. They were all born in sin and shapen in iniquity; their tendencies were toward unrighteousness. They were constitutionally sinful, and the perfect standard of the Law was unattainable by them. (Rom. 7: 10, 12-19; 8: 3; 2 Cor. 3: 7.) Had they been favoured with some arrangement by which the sinful tendencies of the fallen flesh could have been set aside, and not counted against them, it would have gone much better with them. But there was no such provision in the Law Covenant; it was merely "do and live." The natural depravity of the flesh was a con-

stant and insurmountable obstacle to their efforts at keeping the Law. Though with their minds some of them delighted in the Law, these could not bring the flesh into subjection, and therefore those Jews who realised the situation were in a state of despair, described by the Apostle's words, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" —Rom. 7: 25.

The Law Covenant failed in its attempt to make good the first portion of the Abrahamic Covenant or Promise, but it served other ends. Though it had not the substance, it was a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10: 1; 8: 5); though it could not deliver the prisoners of Sin and Death, it did serve to make Sin appear exceeding sinful. (Gal. 3: 19; Rom. 7: 13.) And whereas it did not fulfil the Abrahamic Covenant, neither did it interfere to prevent the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, so as to make this promise of none effect. (Gal. 3: 17.) It has not up till the present time been finished to the extent described in Lev. 26: 38-46; yet, as a would-be fulfiller of the divine purpose expressed in the promise to Abraham, it has been set aside "for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." (Heb. 7: 18, 19; 8: 7.) It could "never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is

not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."—Heb. 10: 1-4.

One Jew—Jesus—was approved of the Law, and under its provisions was entitled to everlasting life; but He had come into the world for the express purpose of dying for our sins (Heb. 2: 9), therefore He relinquished His right to the reward of Ex. 19: 6. But God raised Him from death, and conferred upon Him the dual office of King and Priest, as the "Seed," as He had before sworn to do, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec."—Psalm 110: 4; Heb. 7: 11-18.

The effect of setting aside the Law Covenant, as weak and unprofitable through the flesh, was to leave the Abrahamic promise as it had been before the Law was introduced—a grand promise of a Seed to bless all the families of the earth, the privilege of having the Blessor in his line having been made sure to Abraham by the divine word and oath. (Heb. 6: 13-18.) But this promise, grand and glorious though it be, contains no provision for its own fulfilment; for the eradication of sin and the destruction of death are essential to a permanent blessing. The impotence of the Law Covenant to accomplish these has been so fully demonstrated that it has been found fault with and set aside from further attempts. What is now to be done? Some other attempt must be made to overcome the difficulties of sin and death.

Must God try another experiment? No; He does not experiment, for He knows the end from the beginning. He foreknew and foretold the failure of the Law



Covenant and its sacrifices. Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

"If that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second," said the Apostle, who also said of Jesus, "He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second." (Heb. 8: 7; 10: 9.) Thus is brought to our notice

### **The New Covenant**

This covenant is instituted on better promises than those of the Law Covenant (Heb. 8: 6); it has Jesus as the covenant-victim, His death as its ratifying sacrifice (Heb. 9: 16) and Himself, by virtue of that sacrifice, as its Mediator. (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6; Heb. 9: 15.) As He is Mediator of the New Covenant, instituted upon better promises, His Priesthood is correspondingly better than was Aaron's; so much better is it that He is able to "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. 8: 6; 7: 16, 20, 22, 24, 25.

### **"Better Promises"**

The Law Covenant called for strict compliance with the letter of commandments that were external to the people, and contrary to their constitutional tendencies. The better promise and provision of the New Covenant is that the law of God is to be written on the hearts and minds of its beneficiaries, so that, eventually, it will be part of their very being. The Law Covenant had no provision for mercy to be extended unto everlasting life to those who slipped on account of weakness of the flesh; the better promise of the New Covenant is that God will be "merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more."

Under the old covenant the people were only involved the more in death, and additionally condemned; the letter killed them. Under the New Covenant, their disposition and desire of heart to do right are acceptable, and by the processes of this Covenant their characters gradually become established in righteousness. The spirit gives life; and this is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes free from the law of sin and death.—2 Cor. 3: 3, 6-8, 18; Heb. 8: 8-12; 10: 16, 17; Rom. 7: 6, 10, 24; 8: 1-4.

### **The New Covenant Victim**

It was customary to ratify covenants over a victim. The covenant with Abraham, concerning his seed, and the possession of the land, was so ratified. (Gen. 15: 8-18.) The Law Covenant was similarly ratified. (Ex. 24: 5-8.) The New Covenant must also be attested by the death of a victim, and it was so done. But as this was to be a better covenant than that of the Law, and was to be the means of doing away with sin and death, and of making the Abrahamic promise sure (Rom. 4: 13-16, 22-25; 5: 1, 2; Heb. 9: 15), it must have a better sacrifice than that of the Law Covenant. Jesus was that victim or testator of the New Covenant; He died in order that the covenant might be valid and firm. (Heb. 9: 16, 17, *Diaglott.*) In the preceding chapter, we have seen the testimonies that Jesus' sacrifice was the antitype of the bullock and the goat sacrifices offered on the Jewish Day of Atonement, as well as of the Passover Lamb. His sacrifice was also the sole antitype of the "calves and goats" whose blood ratified the shadowy and typical Law Covenant (Heb. 9: 19; Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11:

25), and, when "sprinkled" on him who desires to enter into a covenant with God (Ex. 24: 8; Heb. 9: 19, 20; 12: 24), it becomes the bond of union between God and the other party. It is a "surety" (Heb. 7: 22) to God on behalf of the man, in that it is at the same time a corresponding price for him. It is also a surety to the man on God's behalf, because it is a corresponding price, and allows God to be the justifier of him who believes in Jesus, in respect of all sins and weaknesses traceable to the Adamic transgression.—Rom. 3: 22-26.

### **The New Covenant Mediator**

Moses was mediator of the Law Covenant. Jesus is Mediator of the New Covenant. (Heb. 12: 24.) As Moses was mediator in the simple or primary meaning of that word, viz., an internunciator, so is Jesus referred to as the "Messenger of the Covenant." (Mal. 3: 1.) Moses was mediator between God and a people who were entirely willing to enter into the Law Covenant. Jesus is Mediator between God and those who, when the New Covenant for forgiveness of sins is proposed to them, and they realise it, are entirely willing to enter into it. Nothing is more obvious than that a covenant cannot be arranged between parties not disposed thereto. Moses did not personally communicate the message of his covenant to all the host of Israel, but to the elders of the people, who passed the word on to the others; and so that covenant was instituted by angels (messengers) in the hand (under the direction) of a mediator—Moses. (Gal. 3: 19.) Similarly, Jesus does not, in this age, and will not in the next, personally impart the message of the New Covenant to

every individual of the race. He has sent forth His messengers, to speak in His Name on the subject. The message has been delivered to some during the Gospel age, and it will be delivered to the remainder of men during the Kingdom Age.—Luke 24: 47-49; 2 Cor. 5: 18-6: 3; 3: 6; 1 Tim. 2: 5-7; Acts 13: 38-42; John 1: 9.

### **The New Covenant Intercessor**

The negotiation of the Law Covenant did not fulfil all of Moses' obligations in respect of his office of Mediator. He did not leave the people to their own devices, but was still interested in them. So much was he devoted to them that he continued mediator in the sense of reconciler or intercessor with God on their behalf. The first occasion for this came soon after the covenant had been ratified. (Ex. 32: 30-32.) Similarly, the mediator of the New Covenant does not leave to their own devices those who have entered into that arrangement, but continues to be interested in their welfare, so that it is written, "If any man sin, we have an advocate [or helper] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2: 1.) He ever lives to make intercession for them that have come unto God by Him (Heb. 7: 25), and is therefore able to save them to the uttermost, being the surety of this better covenant. It is necessary to be remembered, too, that His priestly office of Intercessor is based on His Mediatorship of the New Covenant, just as Moses' intercession for fleshly Israel was based on his mediatorship of the Law Covenant. (It had been the divine intention to vest the two offices permanently in Moses; but on his demurral (Ex. 4:

10-16) Aaron was given him for spokesman, and he subsequently occupied the high-priestly office, thus becoming a type of Christ as Intercessor.—Heb. 7: 20-28.) And as Moses did not intercede for other people, outside the covenant relationship, neither does Jesus act as Intercessor for any outside the New Covenant relationship. “Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry *by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant.*” (Heb. 8: 6.) He is the Mediator because He gave Himself “a ransom for all.” He is Intercessor “by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant.” These offices of our blessed Saviour are interdependent; none can be wholly a success without the others. The Ransom is the foundation; the Mediatorial office for the negotiation and administration of the New Covenant is based on that foundation; the Mediatorial office for Intercession is the third course of the structure.

<b>Intercessor</b>	“Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry <i>by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant.</i> ”—Heb. 8: 6.
<b>Mediator</b>	“The man Christ Jesus who gave Himself a Ransom for all.”—1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.
<b>Ransom</b>	“Christ died for our sins.”—1 Cor. 15: 3. “Other foundation can no man lay.”—1 Cor. 3: 11.

### **New Covenant Processes**

Three conditions have to be dealt with if the blessing of all the families of the earth promised in the Abrahamic Covenant is to be permanent. These are

(1) the "sins of the past" both of Jews under the Old Covenant and of Gentiles under no covenant; (2) sins committed, whether through weakness or wilfulness, after the past sins have been remitted; (3) the tendency toward sin in all the race.

For the first two of these conditions the Law Covenant made some provision in various offerings, such as those of the Day of Atonement, which were for the whole nation, and the individual sin and trespass offerings from time to time brought by transgressors. All of these, however, never actually took away sin, but served only as reminders of the sinful conditions. (Heb. 10: 1-4.) For the third condition there was no provision in the Law Covenant. Its arrangements could not meet the requirements of the case, and could not overcome the difficulties for those who desired to lead righteous lives.—Gal. 2: 21; 3: 21.

### **Past Sins Remitted**

The New Covenant makes ample provision to deal with these three conditions. (1) It provides an efficacious atoning sacrifice, which has not only redeemed the Jews, who are under the curse of the Law, but which is also a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. (Heb. 9: 15; Rom. 3: 22-26; Gal. 3: 13; 4: 4, 5; John 3: 16; 1 John 2: 2.) "This is My blood of the New Covenant," said our Redeemer, when offering the cup at the Memorial Supper to His disciples; "drink ye all of it." "And they all drank of it." (Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 23, 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25.) This cup represents the blood shed for many (all the world) for the remission of sins. The disciples, being sinful men, must eat His flesh and drink His blood,

else they would have no life in them. (John 6: 47-58). So must all do who would have life. All who would have everlasting life must believe on Him, for no other way has been provided by which God can justly remit the sins that are past, both for Israel and for all nations.—John 3:36; Acts 5:31; 13:38-49; Luke 24:47; Rom. 5:1.

### **Present Sins Forgiven**

(2) The New Covenant arranges not only for remission of past sins, thus passing the believer from death to life, but also for clearing away such future transgressions as shall result from the weaknesses and imperfections of our fallen nature. This is all provided for in the blood of Jesus. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 9, 7.) Here is manifest the intercessory work of the High Priest on behalf of all who have entered into this covenant relationship with God, through His mediation. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." "We" who have the advocate are not the uncovenanted, but are those who have made a covenant with God by or over the sacrifice of His Son, and so have come into the household, being no longer aliens and strangers. (Psa. 50: 3; Eph. 2: 12, 13, 19.) It is not supposed that our Mediator intercedes for each transgressor by name, each time one sins. Rather, the fact of His finished sacrifice constitutes the intercession. Moreover, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart also constitutes an intercession for

him in such a time of need; for if God is accepting the will and effort, notwithstanding the weakness of the flesh to the contrary, the fact that he has the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2: 12, 16; Phil. 2: 5) must, under "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," constitute a powerful intercession on behalf of the believer who has been overtaken in a fault to which the mind of Christ in him gave no consent.—Rom. 8: 2, 26, 27; Gal. 5: 25; 6: 2.

### **Wilful Sins Punished**

The New Covenant deals effectively with sins committed wilfully by those who have come into the relationship with God which it provides. "That servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more." (Luke 12: 47, 48.) A just discrimination is made in respect to all wilful transgressions. No doubt, the master of the house takes into account that some of the wilfulness which needs correction, and which is susceptible to nothing else than painful experience, is hereditary, and is to that extent, when confessed, covered by the precious blood. He knows the hearts of His people, and suits the correction to their need.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days [of the Jewish Age] spoken unto us by His Son." "For if the word spoken by angels was stead-



fast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth [Moses], much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven."—Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 2, 3; 12: 25.

The sacrifice of Jesus does not cover the intelligently wilful transgressions—small or great—of those who have entered into the New Covenant arrangement and have been sanctified by its blood. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." (Heb. 10: 26.) The Scripture then tells of the extreme measure of wilfulness, and of a "knowledge of the truth" far beyond the merely having-heard-it stage. This is made plain in v. 29—"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the *blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified*, an *unholy thing*, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" The shed blood of Jesus, which is the blood of the New Covenant, and which alone is able to make the comers thereunto perfect, is here referred to. In verses 10, 14, this is described—"By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." What shall we suppose, then, of those who are proclaiming that the blood of the New Covenant is not that of Jesus only, the one offering, but is the joint sacrifice of the Church with Jesus? The Apostle has predicted

precisely this most grievous error. The word translated "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29 is *koinos*, which means, according to Strong's Concordance, "common; literally, shared by all or several." In a ceremonial sense, this word also means "profane;" but that definition does not apply here, because the Apostle is dealing not with ceremonies, but with vital facts.\* If we believe the words of our blessed Master, that the blood of the New Covenant is "*my blood*," let us hold to that precious truth at all cost; and let us not constitute ourselves candidates for the "much sorer punishment," by wresting our Lord's words, and saying that the sacrifice is "primarily His, and secondarily ours," thus counting the blood of the covenant, the "*one offering*," a "common thing," "shared by several." When the disciples drank the cup handed them by our Lord, at the institution of the Memorial Supper, that ceremony was not intended to represent the disciples and other consecrated believers as sharing with Jesus the honour of being the propitiatory sacrifice, but it represented how they shared among themselves the *benefits* of the "*one offering*." This is made plain by the fact that our Lord drank none of the Memorial Cup. And our Lord's concluding words are significant also: "This do in *remembrance of Me*"—not this do in remembrance of yourselves.

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\*The word *koinos* is translated "common" in Acts 10: 14, 28; 11: 8, 9; "defiled" in Mark 7: 2; "unclean" in Rom. 14: 14; in all of which cases it is used ceremonially. It is translated "common" in Acts 2: 44; 4: 32; Titus 1: 4; Jude 3; "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29, in all of which cases it is used literally. These are all the occurrences of *koinos* in the New Testament.

## **Sin Punishable by the Second Death**

Another description of wilful sin punishable by the Second Death is given in Heb. 6: 4-8. "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." The powers of the coming age are those arrangements which God has made through His Son for the eradication of sin, the bringing of mankind to an accurate knowledge of the truth, and the conquering of death. All these are enjoyed by the saints now (in part actually, and in part by imputation—Rom. 4: 24) in sufficient measure to bring full responsibility. They taste Jesus, the heavenly gift, they are passed from a death unto a life standing, they partake of the Holy Spirit, and they feed on the good word of God. All these are realities of their experience now. Hence the reasonableness of the penalty of the second death upon those who sin wilfully. Even were they to come up for trial in the Kingdom Age, when progress toward the physical perfection will be possible to those who accept the terms of the New Covenant, they could expect no change of verdict. Therefore, the verdict found against them in the Gospel Age stands.

God provided for all the necessities of every case coming under the New Covenant in Jesus' blood, everything but absolute wilfulness after

full enlightenment being forgiveable. *The absolutely wilful* one has no sacrifice offered for his wilful sin, whether it be crucifying the Son of God afresh by repudiating His death, or counting the blood of the Covenant, the "*one offering*," a common thing, to be shared by a number along with Jesus, or whether it be a grievous misrepresentation of the Holy Spirit, in attributing good works to an evil power, as did the Scribes and Pharisees. (Matt. 12: 23-37; Heb. 6: 4-8; 10: 26-31.) The Lord alone is competent to judge how much wilfulness is associated with the transgression; and He alone can say whether few stripes, many stripes, or destruction in the Second Death would be the appropriate punishment. No doubt, in His love and mercy, He would administer "*few stripes*" at the first; if these did not suffice to warn the transgressor, "*many stripes*" would follow; if still obstinate in wilfulness and perversion of the truth, even after all the loving discipline of the Lord, "*that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.*" "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"—Heb. 6: 8; 10: 31.

### **Writing the Law on the Heart**

(3) How is the law of God "*written*" on the hearts and minds of the New Covenant people? By the ministration of the Spirit, and the sanctifying power of the truth. (Acts 2: 1-4, 16-21; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9, 18; John 17: 17.) As the consecrated believer in the "*one offering*" submits to these influences, his character is gradually transformed into the divine likeness. "*With open face beholding as*

in a glass the glory of the Lord," he realises himself being "changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The New Covenant is so arranged as to thoroughly eradicate from those who come under it, and are faithful to the end, all tendencies to evil doing, substituting for these a character established in righteousness. The Old Covenant wrote the law of God on tables and in books, and required the people to obey. These writings, being external to the people, were antagonistic and condemnatory, and were a ministration of death to the people. The New Covenant not only puts away out of remembrance the past sins and iniquities, and shows mercy to present and future unrighteousness, but it also puts God's laws *into the hearts and minds* of those under it. This means more than learning by rote; it means that obedience to God becomes constitutional with the New Covenant people, and that their "stony" hearts are displaced by hearts of flesh; that is, their naturally stubborn and rebellious "etony" dispositions are gradually transformed into more susceptible, human-like dispositions.

In the case of the Jews, it had been foretold, "They shall be all taught of God," and Jesus was set forth, as God's representative, to be the Teacher, as well as the Saviour. (John 6: 27-29, 44-47.) It was His mission to reveal the Father. (John 14: 17; Matt. 11: 27.) Those who become pupils of the meek and lowly Jesus learn to love Him for His character as well as for His offering of Himself as their Saviour; and they are also made acquainted with the character and plans of the Heavenly Father. They know Him

not by hearsay only, and not by observing what He is to others, but each one as he understands more and more of God's character and disposition, and as he imitates that character, is transformed into the same image. He thus knows God experimentally. A person lacking in conscientiousness cannot understand or know a conscientious person, for the reason that the principles on which a conscientious person acts are unknown to him. So one in alienation from God, and living in sin, cannot know God, His character or the principles governing His acts. But those who repudiate sin and accept the terms of the New Covenant are so transformed by the renewing of their minds that they are able to prove by practice the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12: 2.) In them is our Lord's prayer fulfilled—"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17: 3.) Those who know God in this way need none to say to them, "Know the Lord," for each one knows Him for himself. And as the gracious terms of the New Covenant are more widely circulated, during the Gospel Age and during the Kingdom Age, this blessed experience will be the portion of the vast majority of mankind. It is written concerning the New Covenant ministry during the Gospel Age—"Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters,' saith the Lord

Almighty." (2 Cor. 5: 18-21; 6: 16-18; Heb. 8: 10.) Concerning the New Covenant ministry of the Kingdom Age similar language is used—"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."—Rev. 21: 3; Heb. 8: 10.

### **The Application of The New Covenant**

To what purpose and to whom does the New Covenant apply? The New Covenant was instituted to supersede the Law Covenant (Heb. 8: 7, 8), for the purpose of accomplishing what the Law could not do on account of weakness of the flesh. (Rom. 8: 1-4.) Bearing in mind that the purpose of the Law Covenant was to develop the kings and priests to give the blessing to all nations (Ex. 19: 5, 6), it should be expected that the first task of the New Covenant would be to develop the members to be joined with Jesus as the "Seed." This harmonizes with what is written, "And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, that . . . they which are called (Rom. 9: 24) might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9: 15; 1 Peter 1: 4.) This is the force of the "allegory" of Gal. 4: 22-31. The Galatian brethren had become confused, and were drifting towards the bondage of the Law. The Apostle's letter to them contrasts the Law with the Spirit (Gal. 2: 1-5), as also in his epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9), and now, by the figure of Sarah and Hagar, he would teach them the same thing; viz., that they were not under the ministration of the Law, which

bound, but of the Spirit, which liberates. (Gal. 5: 1.) In a word, they and all who looked upon themselves as Christ's and therefore Abraham's "Seed," were not children of the Law Covenant, but of the New Covenant; they were not of Hagar, but of Sarah.

Remembering that the Abrahamic Covenant promised a "Seed" and a blessing through that "Seed," but provided no means for the fulfilment of its promise; and remembering that the Law Covenant endeavoured to bring forth the Seed, but was not able to do more than bear children to "bondage," we see how Hagar and Sarah beautifully represent the Law and New Covenants. The literal Hagar could not be the mother of him in whom Abraham's Seed was to be called, but Sarah was. So the Law Covenant could not bring forth the true "Seed," but the New Covenant can, and it is doing so.

The ministration of the Spirit is not confined to the Gospel Age, for, after the "first fruits" are gathered (Rev. 14: 4), the "everlasting gospel" is to be still more widely proclaimed—"to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. (Rev. 14: 6; Rom. 8: 19-23.) The New Covenant is thus seen to extend through the two ages of God's plan following its ratification by the blood of Jesus. "After those days" in which the Law Covenant had been found unsatisfactory (Heb. 8: 10, 7, 8), a New Covenant is instituted, and the Holy Spirit thus testifies to us. (Heb. 10: 14-23.) Again, when the Lord will deal with Israel to take away their sins, after the period of blindness in part that has happened unto them until the fulness from among the Gentiles be come in, He



will do so on the terms of the only Covenant that really can take away sin.—Rom. 11: 25-27.

### **The New Covenant with Israel**

But why does the Scripture invariably name Israel in connection with the New Covenant? The answer is indicated in Rom. 11: 17-24. The olive tree represents Israel's favoured position as God's people, individual Israelites being considered the "branches." The grafting of the wild branches into the places vacated by the natural branches represents how Gentile believers during the Gospel Age become, as it were, members of Israel, in order to inherit the promise originally pertaining to Israel. By so being grafted in, they become "the Israel of God." (Rom. 9: 4; Gal. 6: 16; Eph. 3: 6; Rev. 7: 1-8.) In the Kingdom Age, the people of the nations will associate themselves with Israel after God takes away the "blindness in part." By thus associating themselves with the Jews, they will be "built in the midst of my people"—will be reckoned as Israelites, and thus beneficiaries of the New Covenant.—Jer. 12: 16; Zech. 8: 20-23.

There is, however, another way of viewing the application of the New Covenant. Since this covenant is to take away sin, and since it is the only one that can do so, every reference to the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ must be taken as a reference to the New Covenant. Repentance and remission of sins were and are to be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem; whence it is clear that the New Covenant provisions are and will be applicable to Gentiles as well as to Jews. (Luke 24:

47; Eph. 1: 7; Col. 1: 14, 21, 22.) The special significance of the word "New" would be to Jews with whom the "Old" one had been made; it would not be a "new" covenant to Gentiles, who had not been under a covenant with God. To them, that which was to Israel a "new" one would be the first.

The New Covenant is thus seen in its proper light, as an instrument fully able to clear away the disadvantages of sin, and to form a character of righteousness and holiness in its beneficiary. This character is to be endowed by God with everlasting life. Those who have followed in the footsteps of Jesus are to be exalted to joint heirship with Him; those who did God's will in former ages will be made "princes in all the earth;" those who obey under the easier conditions of the Kingdom Age will have human perfection and everlasting life on the earth, the difference between them and the Ancient Worthies being in point of time, and in the honourable position to be held by the latter during the Kingdom Age. The New Covenant says nothing as to the plane of being on which everlasting life acquired under it shall be enjoyed, and thus it is able to operate for the benefit of both the spiritual and the earthly classes.

### **The New Covenant In the Gospel and Kingdom Ages**

That the New Covenant is applied to the Church of the Gospel age, and will also be applied to the people in the Kingdom age, is perfectly plain from a consideration of the specifications of the New Covenant as referred to in various Scriptures.

"I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." (Heb. 8:10.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—2 Cor. 3:3, 9, 18; Heb. 10:14-16; in the Kingdom age—Rom. 11:27.

"I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." (Heb. 8:10.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—2 Cor. 6:16-18; in the Kingdom age—Rev. 21:3.

"They shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8:11.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—Eph. 2:19; John 17:3; 14:7-10; 1 John 3:1, 2; 2:13; in the Kingdom age—Jer. 12:14-17; John 17:21-23.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—Heb. 10:17-20; Eph. 4:32; in the Kingdom age—Jer. 30:18-24; Rom. 11:27-32.

### **New Covenant Terms Applicable to the Ancients**

Before the New Covenant had been ratified by the death of Jesus, its terms were made applicable to those who had faith. If we do not take this view of God's dealings with the Ancients, we practically assert that God has two arrangements for the forgiveness of sins, one through faith in Christ, applicable since Calvary, and another through faith generally considered, without reference to Christ's death and the Covenant ratified by it. If God could accept the Patriarchs on account of their faith alone, and could justify them without consideration of the New Covenant blood shed for the remission of sins, He could equally well accept

others in the same manner. This would be tantamount to saying that Christ died unnecessarily. On the contrary, there is only the one way of salvation.—Acts 4: 12.

We read, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." "Now, it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4: 3, 21-25; 3: 22-26.) The non-imputation of sin where it exists and the imputation of righteousness where it does not exist, can be accomplished only in view of an arrangement satisfactory to divine justice. The sacrifices offered by the Patriarchs were acknowledgments of need on their part, but those sacrifices could not take away sin, any more than could those of the Law Covenant. The only satisfactory arrangement is that in the New Covenant ratified by the blood of Jesus; and we must conclude that the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of righteousness extended to those who had faith in God and believed what He told them, before the death of Christ, were on New Covenant terms, *in anticipation* of the actual inauguration of the arrangement. That is to say, God took the risk, if there were one, of counting Abraham's faith to Him for righteousness, in view of the sacrifice that had been arranged for from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 13. 8.

"The righteousness which is of faith" was made known to the Jews. (Deut. 30: 11-14; Rom. 10: 8-12.) This was something they could have done,

whereas the Law Covenant was beyond their ability to do. Some of them had faith, and got a good report through it. (Heb. 11: 39.) By these dealings of God with His faithful ones of old, it can be discerned that God was pleased to accept on New Covenant terms those who had faith in Him; before the ratification and formal publication of the New Covenant, not ignoring it or without consideration of it on His part, but in anticipation of it.

### **Inauguration of the New Covenant**

It has been pointed out that there are many parallels between the Law and the New Covenants. These extend to some particulars connected with the inaugurations of both. The first item of the Law was the Passover. The first item of the New Covenant is the antitype of this—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." This antitype superseded the type on its appointed date, for Christ died on the 14th Nisan, after having been "taken up" enthusiastically by the people, when He rode into Jerusalem. (Ex. 12: 3-6; John 12: 1, 12-16; 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8.) The Day of Pentecost (Jewish reckoning) is observed by the Jews as the festival of the giving of the Law. On the Day of Pentecost following our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension, the New Covenant had its beginning in the ministration of the Spirit, which was to supersede the ministration of the old letter. The Law Covenant was introduced with signs and wonders. So was the New Covenant. (Exod. 19: 15-18; Gal. 3: 19; Heb. 2: 2-4.) "If they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we

turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven.”  
—Heb. 12: 18-25.

At the inauguration of the Law Covenant the mountain shook; at the inauguration of the New Covenant a shaking began which has continued throughout the age (Acts 17: 30; 2 Cor. 10: 3-5; Eph. 6: 12); and which will ultimately remove completely not only the social “earth,” but also the ecclesiastical “heavens.” But we who have received a Kingdom which cannot be shaken may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.—Heb. 12: 25, 29.

When the New Covenant shall presently be proposed to Israel as a whole, and the world generally, there will be more signs and wonders. As Pharaoh and his host were overthrown, so will Satan and his host of evil spirits be rendered powerless.

### **The Everlasting Covenant**

Several of the Covenants which God made are styled “everlasting.” Not that they all are to be considered endless, but rather uninterrupted or perpetual until such time as may have been appointed for them to expire. The Covenant with Noah (Gen. 9: 9-17), that of the Law (Ex. 31: 16; Lev. 24: 7-9; Num. 18: 19; Isa. 24: 5), that with David (2 Sam. 23: 5; 2 Chron. 13: 5), that with Abraham (Gen. 17: 7, 13, 19; Psalm 105: 8-11), and the New Covenant (Jer. 32: 40; Heb. 13: 20, 21) are called everlasting, although it is well understood that the Law Covenant was strictly limited as to time.—Gal. 3: 19.

Throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Law and the New Covenants are continually contrasted, with a

view to showing the superiority of the New—its permanence as against the temporary character of the other. Just at the close of the Epistle, considering his case proved, he refers to the Covenant whose superiority he has sought to demonstrate, and calls it the “Everlasting Covenant.” There is some difference of opinion among translators as to whether “through the blood of the everlasting covenant” should modify the phrase that follows it, or the one which precedes it, but the weight of numbers seems to be in favour of the opinion that our Lord Jesus is “the Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” as expressing the Apostle’s meaning in this connection. Whichever opinion be right, there is truth in both. Our blessed Redeemer has become the Chief Shepherd, because He shed His blood of the New Covenant for many for the remission of sins, and His people are made perfect by that “one offering” which He gave. (Rom. 14: 9; Heb. 10: 10, 14.) That the New Covenant is here meant is further evident from the fact that His blood belongs to no other, never being Scripturally associated with any but the New Covenant.

### Summary

“Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum.” It has been seen that salvation from sin and death, the prime necessity of our race, has been provided in the divine purpose. Pursuant to the accomplishment of His purpose, God covenanted with Abraham that the blessing to all the families of the earth should be given through his seed. The Abrahamic Covenant was not an agreement that the families of the earth should be blessed, but that the honour of blessing them should be granted to Abraham’s Seed.

The Abrahamic Covenant did not contain within itself the provision for the fulfilment of its gracious promise. Hagar, the bondmaid, brought forth *a* seed, but her child was not *the* seed promised. The Law Covenant sought to bring forth the promised "seed," but could not. It brought forth a seed unto bondage, just as did Hagar in the allegory.—Ex. 19: 5, 6; Rom. 8: 1.

In due time, Sarah, the free woman, bore Isaac, the promised child. So, in due time, the New Covenant, a covenant of liberty (Gal. 5: 1), is bringing forth the Sons of God by Jesus Christ.—Gal. 4: 5-7; 3: 26; Rom. 8: 1-4; Heb. 9: 15.

The reason why the Abrahamic Covenant could not develop the promised "Seed" was because it contained no provision for salvation from sin and death. The Hagar or Law Covenant contained such a provision, but it was found inadequate, gendering only to bondage. The New Covenant contains such a provision, based on the blood of Jesus, shed for its ratification and also for the remission of sins. The New Covenant provision is entirely adequate for the forgiveness of past sins and of future ones, as far as they arise out of Adamic weakness. The New Covenant is, therefore, competent to be the "mother" of the promised "Seed."—Gal. 4: 22-31; Heb. 10: 1-10; Rom. 5: 6-11; 1 John 1: 7-9; 2: 2.

Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and is also High Priest on behalf of His Church. He both reconciles God to us and us to the Father; and, after we have entered into Covenant relationship, he intercedes on our behalf when we transgress. Moses was a type of Christ,



both as messenger of a covenant and as intercessor for the transgressing covenant people.—Ex. 19: 1-8; 24: 1-8; 32: 30-32; Mal. 3: 1; John 12: 32, 33; Heb. 7: 22, 25; 8: 6; 9: 15; Rom. 8: 34.

Those who submit themselves to the ministration of the New Covenant shall receive life; it is a ministry of the Spirit which gives life, whereas the letter or the Old Covenant brought condemnation and death. The New Covenant operation is for the formation of character, and the life granted to those who are faithful under it may be on any plane; the New Covenant does not in itself stipulate. Christ, its Messenger and Mediator, has brought *both* life and immortality to light through the Gospel, the New Covenant message.—2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9, 11, 18; Heb. 8: 6-13; 2 Tim. 1: 10, 11.

Those who are reconciled to God have the privilege of extending the message concerning the New Covenant and its Mediator, and should do so as much as they are able.—2 Cor. 5: 18-6: 3; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7; Luke 24: 47.

The blood of the New Covenant is that of Jesus alone. The Church is invited to be followers in His footsteps of suffering, that she may share His glory; that as He overcame and inherited a throne, so she may overcome and inherit the throne with Him. This sharing of His sufferings is not to be viewed as participating with Him in shedding the blood required for the sealing of the New Covenant. By His Own sacrifice He did this, in order that we might be permitted to obtain the eternal inheritance. The blood of the Covenant which perfects and sanctifies is "my blood," and if we count it as something shared by a number ("Koinos," translated "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29, means "common

in the sense of sharing), we shall not be able to justify ourselves in God's sight as not deserving "much sorer punishment" than transgressors against the Mosaic Covenant.—Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25; Rev. 3: 21; Heb. 9: 15; 10: 10, 14, 28-31.

**"Hold Fast the Form of Sound Words."**

**"Study to show thyself Approved unto God,  
A Workman that needeth not to be Ashamed,  
Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth."**

**"See that He Refuse not Him that Speaketh."**

— 2 Tim. 1: 13; 2: 15; Heb. 12: 25. —

## X.

### The Dead— Where Are They?

“Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?”—Job 14: 10.

**Q**UESTION of Questions! The Universal Inquiry! What is the state of those who have passed away?

Not an individual but has been indirectly affected by death, through the loss of dear ones; not one but has to look forward to being directly affected by his own experience of death. No wonder that great interest in this question has been and is manifested by people of every condition and colour the world over. Love for friends requires that interest in their welfare should not cease immediately they have been entombed. Self-interest, if there were no higher motive, urges one to acquire for one's own benefit all possible information concerning this great question.

In quest of this information, men have applied to all and sundry, and varied have been the replies received. The Atheist has given his answer; the Philosopher has published to the world his speculations; the Scientist has made known the results of his investigations; and they do not agree.

#### The Atheist's Answer

The Atheist gives a very straightforward answer to the question, “The Dead—Where are They?” There

is no mincing of words. He says that the dead are forever gone; they will never again be seen or heard of. This gives no consolation to the bereaved heart, and offers no pleasant prospect concerning the future of the inquirer. It is not surprising that some who accept the Atheistic view have adopted as their guiding principle, "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die."—1 Cor. 15: 32.

### **The Philosopher's Answer**

The Philosopher undertakes an answer to the question. He notes that in the human mind there is a longing for the continuance of life and activity. It is possible that this "longing" would be more accurately described as a difficulty in realising that life and activity will some day cease, and that out of this arises the all but universal belief that death is the portal to new scenes and conditions. At any rate, the Philosopher, realising that most human beings who reach years of discretion are more or less persuaded that death does not end all, and that this thought, variously modified according to peoples and times, has been in the minds of men from time immemorial, comes to the conclusion that such thoughts could not exist without cause, and he thinks the cause is that the thought is true. He is therefore quite prepared to believe and teach that death is the departure from present conditions to others, pleasant or painful.

There can be no doubt that the prevalent thought in men's minds is as the Philosopher finds it; but he certainly takes much more for granted than the follower of "pure reason" should allow himself to do, when he assumes that the only way to account for the univer-

sality of this thought, even among peoples who have had no communication with each other, is to admit that it is true. The answer of the Philosopher, while more comforting to many than that of the Atheist, is to be regarded with great reserve; for, after all, it is based on an assumption, and it does not consider all the details that should be examined.

### The Scientific Answer

The Man of Science also has an answer. He takes man as he finds him, and, after many years examination of living beings and study of practical anatomy in the dissecting room, admits that as yet he knows little or nothing about Life and Death. The following extract from "The Hospital" quoted in *The Age*, Melbourne, Jan. 2, 1909, shows the present position of Medical Science in regard to our question:—

"We know neither what Life is, nor what Death is, nor how nor why the one passes into the other. This is not for want of guessing, for many centuries and much hard thinking have been devoted to this business in the realm of pure speculation. But these speculations have not advanced us a whit, and even now, when the sacrosanct problem of Life has long since been impounded by biologists and submitted to the cold contemplation of science, we are forced to confess that the secret remains remarkably well hidden. Though much has been learnt of the processes attending Life, and of the conditions governing its continuance or conclusion, what in essence it is, how it begins and what determines the gradual failure which we call senescence, on these matters we are still pretty thoroughly in the dark. 'Radiobes,' the putative examples of a spontaneous generation under the influence of radium emanations, have had their day, and have left us what

we were, unexplained examples of the first and greatest mystery that man has encountered—Life.”

The mission of Science is the acquisition of exact knowledge. In his search for accurate information, the Scientist is supposed to take nothing for granted; though, as we have seen, the student of the evolution theory has not always adhered to this maxim. Up to now, the Scientist is not able to agree with the Philosopher's answer to our question, because he cannot find anything to show that mind is capable of acting without an organism. Cases of injury to the skull are continually being dealt with in hospitals. If the patient be brought in unconscious, he knows nothing at all until consciousness is restored, and the time of unconsciousness is to him a perfect blank. The surgeon, by raising depressed bone and thus relieving pressure on certain parts of the brain, has sometimes been able to restore memory, and even identity, which for a long period had been lost. By the same benevolent use of the knife, vicious and destructive persons have been transformed, as though miraculously, into kind and gentle beings, who would not think of injuring others. These and related facts prevent the Physician from adopting the Philosopher's answer to our question; and as the Physician's careful studies teach him nothing about resuscitation of those whose organisms have returned to the original dust, he is at present inclined to see nothing better than what the Atheist points out. This is not strange; for Science knows nothing beyond what is comprehensible by sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. The Scientist, therefore, while he lays us under obligation for much informa-

tion that is both interesting and valuable, cannot help us to a conclusive answer to our question about the Dead.

### **The Spiritualist's Answer**

In the last half century, the cult of Spiritualism has acquired much prominence. It claims to furnish the answer to the question now before us; in fact, its prominence and notoriety are based on its dealing with this question, which it regards as its own special province.

The special interest attached to the Spiritualist's answer to our important question is that he claims to prove what the Philosopher regards as reasonable, and what the Scientist cannot demonstrate; that is, he claims to prove the persistence of conscious being after the event of death. In support of this, the Spiritualist produces many phenomena, including extraordinary demonstrations of power and alleged messages from deceased persons to their surviving friends, these exhibitions being invariably made through a "medium" or "sensitive."

There is much testimony of eye witnesses to the Spiritualistic phenomena. The testimony is not borne only by the uneducated and those who have had no scientific training; much of it, particularly within the last five years, is given by men of high standing in the scientific world. The phenomena and messages may therefore be accepted as facts, not as fraud nor illusion. But the crucial question is not thereby answered; and these scientific men, though almost persuaded, generally admit that the identity of the spirits producing the phenomena and sending the

messages has never been established. It has never been proved that the spirit sending a message is the deceased person it claims to be. As long as this point remains open, the Spiritualist's answer to the question, "The Dead—Where are They?" must be considered incomplete, therefore not acceptable.

Our belief is that the Spiritualistic demonstrations are produced by evil angels, who have never been human beings, but who know the history of our race, and who are able to impersonate the deceased, even to the mimicry of small peculiarities, unknown to all except intimates. These are the angels who associated with the human race before the Flood, to their mutual disadvantage, and who have since been bound in chains of darkness, unto the great judgment day, when they shall also be judged, to determine whether they will submit themselves to be brought under the one Head, even under Christ. They do not now enjoy all their former liberties; hence their work is mostly done under cover of darkness or reduced light, and through mediums.—Gen. 6: 1-4; 2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6.

### **The Bible's Answer**

Coming to the divine Word, seeking its answer to the great question, we are at once impressed with its candour and simplicity. The Scriptural answer to the problem is direct and straightforward, without appeal to passion or prejudice. Having proved the Bible worthy of all confidence, and having found in it the expression of the divine purpose for the blessing of the race—a purpose so grand and comprehensive, so wise and just, and loving, as to command our unqualified admiration and reverence—we may well consider in



advance that the Bible answer, whatever it may be, to our question will not only commend itself to reason, but will also be found harmonious with all the divine attributes so grandly manifest in the plan of salvation.

A clear description of the state of the dead is found in Psalm 88: 10-12. This is Hebrew poetry, and its structure is according to the manner of those times—thought repetition. It will be observed that each line consists of two members, and that as the first members correspond throughout, so do the second members agree; the second member of the first line being defined and explained by the second member in each of the following lines:—

“Wilt thou show wonders—to the dead?

Thy loving kindness—in the grave?

Thy faithfulness—in destruction?

Thy wonders—in the dark?

Thy righteousness—in the land of forgetfulness?”

“Dead — Grave — Destruction — Dark — Forgetfulness!”

“In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?”—Psalm 6: 5.

“The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.”—Psalm 115: 17.

The Psalms were the Hebrew hymnal, used in the worship of God. How different their testimony from much that is found in modern hymnals! will at once occur to the student. It is a great misfortune that, along with so much that is grand and Scriptural, some Christian hymn writers have produced other work which is based on the uncertain speculations of philosophy rather than on the sure foundation of divine

truth. The following lines, when contrasted with the above selection from the divinely inspired Hebrew hymnal, will illustrate this point:—

“Why should we start and fear to die?  
What tim’rous worms we mortals are!  
Death is the gate of endless joy;  
And yet we dread to enter there.

—Isaac Watts.

Testimony corroborative of that in the Psalms is not lacking in other parts of the Scripture.

“The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.”—Isa. 38: 18.

“To him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion.” This contrast is better appreciated when it is remembered that in those countries the dog was not a household pet as with us, but was a half wild outcast, the scavenger, as to-day in the streets of Constantinople. The lion, on the other hand, was regarded as the majestic king of the beasts. What difference does death make, to justify this comparison between dead and living persons, intimating that the living, however meanly circumstanced, is in a better condition than the dead, however majestic the latter had been in life? The difference is explained to be—“For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished, neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to

do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9: 4-6, 10.) The advantage that the living have over the dead is that the living know at least this much, that they shall die; but the dead know nothing at all.

### Death a Sleep

In harmony with the foregoing, death is described as a *sleep*. "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? . . . Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their *sleep*." (Job 14: 10-12.) "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are *asleep*, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep* in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are *asleep*." (1 Thes. 4: 13-15.) The martyr Stephen, while being stoned, after seeing the vision of Jesus' glory, and praying for his persecutors, fell *asleep*.—Acts 7: 60.

These Scriptures show the great impropriety of considering that those who have fallen *asleep* in death are more awake than they were before their decease. The use of the word *sleep* in the natural way does not imply wakefulness on the part of the sleeper; neither should it be so thought of when used figuratively for death. In both cases the meaning is the same—quiet, unconscious, dark, forgetful *rest*.

The above texts also show that the saints and faithful of present and past ages did not at death immediately pass to their everlasting reward. This thought is corroborated by several other portions. "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14: 2, 3.) Here our Lord makes the union of His saints with Himself depend on His second advent, and in 1 Thes. 4: 16 the Apostle says the same, showing that those who sleep in Jesus and who are to be brought with Him are not in heaven. "The Lord Himself shall *descend*, . . . and the dead in Christ shall *rise*."

David was a man after God's own heart, for though he sometimes sinned grievously he repented and sought to repair the wrong he had done; yet the Scripture says of him, "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2: 34.) Our Lord said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven."\*—John 3: 13.

### **Sheol, Hades, Hell, Gehenna**

Death is the same for both good and bad men. The same word describes the condition of both, many times over: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost [breath], and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." (Gen. 25: 8.) And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered

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\*The words, "which is in heaven," are an interpolation, omitted from Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. See Revised Version, margin.

into his people." (Gen. 35: 29.) "So David slept with his fathers." (1 Kings 2: 10.) "So Ahab slept with his fathers." (1 Kings 22: 40.) All of them—good kings, bad kings, good subjects, bad subjects—went to *hell*. This may seem a severe statement to make, and, in truth, if "hell" means eternal torment, it is too severe a penalty to prescribe for even the most hardened wretch that has ever polluted the earth. But "hell" does not mean eternal misery. In the Old Testament it is a translation of the Hebrew word "sheol," which occurs 65 times. It is rendered "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times, "pit" 3 times. In no case is the thought of eternal misery associated with the word, but always death—in which there is no remembrance, no joy, no love, no hate, no envy, no sensation whatever. In the New Testament, "hell" is a translation of the Greek words "hades" and "gehenna." The former is the equivalent of "sheol."—Compare Psalm 16: 10 with Acts 2: 27, R.V.

"Sheol" and "Hades" both mean the covered, hidden or concealed place or state. The English word "hell" originally had this meaning, and four centuries ago it was in common use in England among the people. The farmer would "hell" his root crops; that is, he would bury them to protect them from the frost. The builder would "hell" a house; that is, he would put a roof on it. The word was probably in a transition stage about the time the Authorised Version was being made, A.D. 1611. Other words used in this version, the meanings of which have materially altered in the last three centuries, are "prevent," in 1 Thes. 4: 15, which then meant "precede," but which is not now

used with that meaning. The word "let" in 2 Thes. 2: 7 meant "hinder," three hundred years ago, but now it means nearly the opposite of that. So the word "hell" had originally none of the terrible meaning that it has now. The student should verify the above statements, concerning the now obsolete meanings of "hell," "prevent," and "let," by consulting any unabridged dictionary of the English language.

"Gehenna" was the name given to a valley outside Jerusalem, into which everything fit for destruction was cast. Fires were kept burning there; but if something cast into the valley lodged on a rocky ledge and did not fall into the fire, worms would presently consume it; no one would interfere with the destructive work of either the flames or the worms. Just as Jerusalem in Palestine typified the "New Jerusalem," so did the "Valley of Hinnom," called "Gehenna," typify the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," "without" the New Jerusalem. (Isa. 66: 24.) This lake means "the second *death*," not everlasting torment, and it was to this that our Saviour referred. (Mark 9: 43-48; Rev. 21: 8; 22: 15.) Sheol and Hades may be understood as generally referring to the death that has come upon all the race on account of the transgression in Eden. This has passed upon all. (Rom. 5: 12.) Gehenna may be understood as referring to the death which comes as a consequence of wilfulness upon those who have been brought to a knowledge of the truth.

To note a few instances of good men going to Sheol will be instructive, as showing that sheol means the death condition, not torment—"O that thou wouldst

hide me in the grave [sheol], that thou wouldest keep me secret until thy wrath be past." (Job 14: 13.) Evidently Job did not think of sheol as meaning a place of torment, since he prayed to be hidden there until God's wrath were overpast. Gen. 37: 35; 42: 38; 44: 29, 31 are similar instances, telling of Jacob's trouble over the loss of Joseph and the anticipated loss of Benjamin. "For I will go down into the grave [sheol] unto my son [Joseph, supposed dead] mourning." "If mischief befall him [Benjamin] by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave [sheol]."

### Death for Man and Beast

Having noted the Scripture testimony that death is the same for both good and evil men, it is now necessary for us to learn a further lesson; viz., that death as such is the same for man as for the beast—the cessation of life. This may appear humiliating to us, who regard ourselves as lords of creation; but if it be true there can be no possible advantage in disregarding it. "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; *as the one dieth, so dieth the other*; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man *whether* [this reading is supported by many versions, including the Revised] it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, *whether* it goeth downward to the earth?" (Eccl. 3: 19-21.) It would seem that already in Solomon's day, nearly 3000 years ago, there were philosophers arguing on the same lines as those

mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that man had some advantage over the beast in death. Solomon reproves these, not with the unwisdom derived from his association with false religions, but by expressing the sentiments of the divinely inspired Psalms of his father David, which he must often have heard sung in the temple service. In view of *Psa.* 88: 10; 115: 17; 6: 5, what else could he have written than "*Who knoweth the spirit of man, whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth?*" Surely the vain philosophers did not *know* it, even though they may have thought and taught it; and Solomon, instructed by divine wisdom, knew what the philosophers did not know, viz., that man and beast have one breath, breathe the same air, and when they cease to breathe they cease to live. This being so, the good man, as far as death itself is concerned, is no better off than the evil one, and the beast is no worse than either.

### **The Spirit of Man**

"Ruach" in the Old Testament and "pneuma" in the New Testament are equivalent, and are translated "spirit." Their primary significance being an unseen power, both words have a wide range of meaning; viz., spirit in the sense of a spirit being, as God, Christ, angels and the joint heirs with Christ; spirit in the sense of mind or disposition; air or wind; breath, including the idea of power to live. In the last of these senses the word "ruach" is used in *Gen.* 7: 15—"breath of life," literally "breath of lives," referring to the power to live by breathing that God had given to the beasts of the earth and the fowl of the



air. The same phrase, "breath of lives," occurs in Gen. 2: 7, where the creation of man is described, and it refers to the power to live by breathing which God gave to man as well as to the lower animals. With the same significance is "ruach" used in Eccl. 3: 21—"who knoweth the spirit of man,"—the breath, and in verse 20—"they have all one breath." In the first verses of Eccl. 12 the gradual decay of the human body is described. In verse 7 the result of the separation of breath and body is shown to be that the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit ("ruach"), or power to live by breathing, returns to God who gave it.

### **Man Became a Living Soul**

Gen. 2: 7, after describing the uniting of the body and the breath of lives, states that the result of the union was that the "man *became* a living soul." It has been thought by some that the man *received* a soul unto himself; but the Scriptures use a different word, whose significance should not be overlooked. All are fully acquainted with the difference between "received" and "became." Before God started the breathing process (by breathing into the man's nostrils "the breath of lives"), there was no being nor animation. The breathing process started, animation resulted; and the hitherto inanimate form "*became* a living soul" or being. The union of breath and body produced the soul or being; the dissolution of that union between body and breath means the death of that soul or being. This was the condemnation that Adam brought upon himself. When he stopped breathing his power to live

ceased; the soul or being died, as the Scriptures say, "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*"—Ezek. 18: 4.

### **Man In God's Likeness**

Wherein consisted the likeness of the man to his Maker? We see that it was not in that man was given to have "life in himself." That was originally the quality of Jehovah, solely (John 5: 26), and was given by Him to the Son at His resurrection. It is also to be given—which shows it is not yet possessed by them—to the Church, the joint heirs with Jesus. (Rom. 2: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 49, 53.) The original likeness to God, as manifested in the first pair, was in the moral attributes. They were able to appreciate and to exercise within their limitations the moral qualities which find full expression in the Almighty. After the transgression, the likeness began to grow dim, and the present condition of the race is far from being an expression of the divine likeness. Provision is made in the New Covenant for the rewriting of the divine law on the heart of whosoever will submit to the process, and in the end God's likeness will once more be perfectly manifest in His human sons, as well as in those who will attain to the divine nature. Any of the race not submitting himself to the New Covenant processes after full enlightenment on the subject will be cast into the Second Death.—Gen. 1: 26; Luke 3: 38; Heb. 8: 8-12; Jer. 12: 14-17.

### **The Resurrection of the Dead**

The Scripture testimony concerning the state of the dead has been examined, and it has been seen that the dead are asleep. The Scriptures have been found to

teach that the whole of the race has been condemned to death on account of the one transgression in the Garden of Eden, but that a redemption has been provided through the Ransom for all given by Jesus. This brings us to the teaching which distinguishes the Bible from all other religious systems. These, based on vain philosophies, would have us believe that the dead are not dead, that they do not cease to exist but rather enter at once more fully into life, still keeping on with their conscious activities. Their hope of a future life is therefore based on something within themselves. The Scriptures, on the other hand, fully recognising that the dead are dead, and that they are powerless to help themselves, preach Jesus and the Resurrection. He has obtained by purchase the right to call them forth from the grave, and He will do so. (John 5: 29; 11: 25.) All of heathendom's and most of Christendom's teaching concerning the hope of a future life is based on the fallacy of the philosophers: all the Scripture teaching concerning the hope of a future life for the human race is based on the fact that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was raised from the dead by the power of God. (1 Cor. 15.) Christendom, with its teaching concerning the persistence of life in death and that the faithful have gone to be with the Lord, finds the Scripture teaching of the resurrection of the dead a great inconvenience. Christendom teaches that the soul or spirit (it has been seen that unscriptural meanings have been given to these words) is liberated by death from the "prison" of clay, that the resurrection is a resurrection of the body only; in its opinion,

the resurrection is to be a re-imprisonment of the soul. No wonder the resurrection is an inconvenient doctrine!

Deliverance is provided from death and the grave. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [Sheol]; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hosea 13: 14.) Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory!

### **Depart and be with Christ**

The expression in Phil. 1: 23, of the Apostle's earnest desire to be with the Lord, has caused considerable discussion, and some have found difficulty in harmonising this passage with the general teaching of the Scripture on the subject of "The Dead—Where are They?" On the one hand the Scriptures, Paul's writings included, teach that the saints must wait until the Lord's second advent before they can be with Him. (John 14: 3; Col. 3: 4; 1 Pet. 5: 4; Rev. 11: 15-18.) But in Phil. 1 the Apostle seems to teach that at the moment of departing this life he would be with the Lord. Does he really contradict himself?

No; the Apostle does not contradict himself in this matter. He was a prisoner in Rome, at the time of writing to the Philippians. He did not know which day might be his last. Being a fully consecrated saint, the devoted Apostle was ready for Christ to be magnified through him in any way, whether by a life of activity, or by a martyr's death. Either would be to the Lord's glory (Phil. 1: 20, 21), and which of them to choose he wot not. (v. 22.) He was in a strait betwixt these two—life and death. The apparent contradic-

tion is here: that whereas the Apostle plainly says he is in a strait between life and death, not knowing which of them to choose, the Authorised Version unfortunately makes it appear that after all he preferred death, that being generally 'understood by "depart." This version belittles the Apostle by representing that he did not know his own mind. The word *analuó*, translated "depart," occurs in only one other place in the New Testament, and it is there translated "return"—"And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when He will *return* from the wedding." (Luke 12: 36.) It means "loosing again," and in Phil. 1: 23 it refers to our Lord's return from the heavens, when Paul and all the other faithful would be joined to Him.

This, which the Apostle much preferred, was not one of the two things between which he could not choose, but was a third thing, different from the others, and "far better." He would prefer the returning of Christ, and being with Him; then there would be no more laborious work, no more imprisonment, stripes, stonings and shipwrecks, but there would be a crown of righteousness and glory "at that day."—2 Tim. 4: 8; Col. 3: 4.

**"Absent from the Body,  
Present with the Lord"**

These words of the Apostle (2 Cor. 5: 8) have been held by some to favour the thought that the faithful are ushered into the Lord's presence at death. Yet the Apostle does not say this; he merely expresses his preference to be "absent from the body, and present with the Lord." In this verse he does not refer

to the intermediate condition of sleeping, waiting for the Lord, because that was not his preference. He speaks of this in verses 1-4. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are (1) in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be (2) unclothed, but (3) clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

"In this tabernacle" is the present unsatisfactory state of the consecrated Christian, seeking to walk in the Lord's way, but, hampered by the weakness of the flesh, which causes those who have the first fruits of the spirit to groan within themselves. (Rom. 8: 23.) The "unclothed" condition is the period of waiting for the resurrection, when the faithful one, having finished his course in death, sleeps until the voice of the Lord calls him. This condition was not desired by the Apostle; yet he knew it must needs be. The "clothed upon" condition is that in which the faithful consecrated of the Gospel Age will rejoice when they receive the new estate, the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Then they shall be in the presence of the Lord, for they shall see Him as He is, and shall be like Him.—1 John 3: 2.

In verse 8 the first and third conditions are mentioned, and a decided preference for the third is expressed. The second condition is not mentioned in verse 8, but this does not authorise the thought that the

Apostle expected to pass from the first to the third without staying for a time in the second or grave condition. That he expected to remain "unclothed" for a time, before being "clothed upon," is shown by reference to verse 4, also 2 Tim. 4: 8.

### **The Thief on the Cross**

In His dying hours our Redeemer was associated with malefactors—"numbered with the transgressors." (Isa. 53: 12; Luke 23: 39-43.) One of these "railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us." The other was more kindly disposed. Instead of railing against Jesus, he rebuked the railer, confessing that they two were receiving the just punishment for their crimes, while Jesus had done nothing amiss. Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in [Revised Version and most ancient MSS.] Thy kingdom." What measure of understanding and faith the thief had respecting our Lord's kingdom cannot be gathered from the few words of the narrative. In any case, he was a suppliant, not for a place in the throne, but for kindness to be shown him by the Saviour. Joint heirship in the kingdom is prepared for those who take up their cross daily and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, learning obedience by the things which they suffer. (Heb. 5: 8, 9; 2 Tim. 2: 12.) Manifestly the thief on the cross, making his request only a few hours before decease, could not be reckoned in with the cross bearing, footstep followers and overcomers. But he was among "all the families of the earth," who shall be blessed by that kingdom, even as he prayed. This is the purport of our Lord's answer to him, "Verily, I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with Me

in Paradise." In order to show the harmony of our Lord's words with the general teaching of the Scriptures on the state of the dead, the comma is placed after the word "to-day," instead of before it, as in the Authorised Version; and lest it be thought that an unwarranted liberty has been taken in doing this, the student is asked to note\* that there was no punctuation in the oldest manuscripts of the Bible—not even spaces to separate the words. The reader of the ancient Greek manuscripts, devoid of punctuation, would have other aids to the understanding. Such an aid is given in the case under discussion. Dr. Bullinger, of London, explains—

"The verb 'say,' when used with 'to-day,' is sometimes separated from it by the word *hoti* ('that'), and sometimes it is joined with it by the absence of *hoti*. The word *hoti*, put between 'say' and 'to-day,' throws 'to-day' into what is said, and cuts it off from the word 'say,' e.g., Luke 19: 9—'Jesus said . . . that (*hoti*) this day is salvation come to this house.' Luke 4: 21—'He began to say unto them that (*hoti*) this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' But this is not the case in Luke 23: 43. Here the word *hoti* is absent, therefore the verse should read—'Verily I say to thee this day, thou shalt be with me in paradise.'"

The correctness of this reading is assured not only by the fact that our Lord's words are thus shown to be in harmony with the Scriptures which teach that the dead are really dead, but also by the fact that He did not come in His kingdom on the day of His death. The coming in His kingdom is at the second advent

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\*The reader will also note that the Revised Version punctuation is not always like that of the Authorised Version.



of the Redeemer, when the kingdom will come to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven, to cause the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and to establish in the whole earth the paradise which was once in miniature represented in Eden, but which was lost on account of sin. Our blessed Saviour was not in His Kingdom on the day of His death, neither was He or the thief in paradise on that day. The earliest possible time that would be appropriate for us to speak of Jesus as King would be after His resurrection—perhaps not even until after His ascension, when He was glorified and the Spirit was given. (Rom. 14: 9; Acts 5: 31; 13: 33, 34; John 7: 39.) The thief will not be in paradise until the Saviour calls him out of the tomb. The blessing he sought, no doubt with a measure of faith, on that day, when everything seemed against Jesus and the possibility of His coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords, will then be given him. His "cup of cold water," given to the Lord in the hour of trial, shall not go unrewarded, for "Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

### **The Souls Under the Altar**

In Rev. 6: 9-11 the souls of martyrs "under the altar" are said to cry, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Some have taken this to mean that the martyrs were enjoying a conscious existence between their death and their resurrection. This passage, from the allegorical and highly figurative book of Revelation, is not a proper foundation for a teaching that contradicts the plain statements of Scripture, viz., that the

dead are asleep, that they know not anything, and that therefore they cannot call on the Lord. The dead martyrs, slain on account of their faithfulness to the testimony of Jesus, were offered on the altar of the worldliness of a persecuting church and state—all of them “slain” socially, in the sense of ostracism, and many slain physically also. They could not, while in the death state, personally pray to God, yet *the fact of their martyrdom* could and does cry to Him emphatically, “with a loud voice,” in the same way that Abel’s blood cried unto God from the ground, and in the same way that the faithfulness of the Ancients is a testimony to us. (Gen. 4: 10; Heb. 11: 4.) The martyr Stephen did not in his dying moments cry for vengeance on his persecutors; and were he consciously existing in a disembodied state he would be unlikely to alter his prayer—“Lay not this sin to their charge.” (Acts 7: 60.) The narrative plainly states that, “When he had said this, he fell asleep.” But God, in whose eyes the death of his saints is precious (Psa. 116: 15), has arranged retribution for the persecutors of his people, details of which are given in later chapters of the Apocalypse. It is said of Babylon the great, “*In her was found the blood of the prophets and of the saints and of all that were slain upon the earth.*”—Rev. 17: 6; 18: 5-8, 24.

### **The Spirits in Prison**

This passage (1 Peter 3: 19, 20) has presented great difficulties, especially to those who have not discerned the Scripture testimony concerning the future blessing. They have been puzzled to understand why, if some

were preached to by our Lord, with a view to repentance and salvation, no similar provision was made for subsequent sinners.

The spirits that were disobedient in the days of Noah are not to be understood as spirits of deceased human beings, for the Scriptures have shown us that the dead man is not survived by the soul or spirit. The dead man knows not anything. The disobedient spirits were the spirit beings who kept not their first estate, but associated themselves with the human race in a manner not approved by God. (Gen. 6: 1-4; 2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6.) For this they were imprisoned—"bound in chains of darkness"—and cast down to "hell." Here the phrase "cast down to hell" is a translation of *tartaroo*. This is the only occurrence of the word "*tartaroo*" in the Scriptures.

The disobedient, "cast down" angels were in the earth's atmosphere at the time of our Lord's first advent, and He often came into conflict with them, driving them out of some who were possessed and crazed by them. To them our Lord "went and preached."\* What did He say to the disobedient angels? How did He say it? These interesting questions are fully answered in 1 Peter 3: 18, 19—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He

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\*"Went" is here used in that superfluous manner, more common in times past than now, which still survives in our expression—"I've gone and done it." In this case, "gone" does not imply that a journey was taken; neither is this implied by "went" in 1 Peter 3: 19. Examples of pleonasm are fairly numerous in Scripture. See Deut. 29: 18; 1 Kings 9: 6; Isa. 2: 3; Jer. 29: 12; Matt. 9: 13; 19: 21; Mark 2: 18; John 15: 16; Eph. 2: 17.

might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by [literally "in"] the spirit; *by which* also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Our Lord preached to these fallen angels by His suffering, His death, and His resurrection. There was no formal discourse on a fixed date. His entire ministry and His reward by the Father constituted the "preaching;" and to the angels it must have been a wonderful object lesson on the reward of obedience as contrasted with the penalty attached to their own disobedience.

Is this preaching likely to profit the disobedient angels? It was intended to do so, if they will learn the lesson; for it is written that the dispensation of the fullness of times is not only for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth under Jesus, but also for the purpose of gathering under that one Head the heavenly beings now out of harmony, that is, the imprisoned beings to whom Christ preached by His life, death and resurrection.—Eph. 1: 10.

If the disobedient angels turn from Satan, and submit themselves to Jesus, they will join in the glad ascriptions of praise and honour to God and His Son (Phil. 2: 10; Rev. 5: 13); if they wilfully persist in disobedience, they must be destroyed; for, "All the wicked will He destroy."—Psalm 145: 20; Matt. 25: 41.

### **Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration**

In fulfilment of Matt. 16: 28, our Saviour, as recorded in Matt. 17: 1-9, took Peter, James and John into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. On this occasion Moses and Elias appeared unto them and spoke with Jesus. This incident has

been thought by many earnest Christians to be a certain indication that Moses and Elias were not really asleep, as the Scriptures teach to be the state of the dead; for, if they were asleep, how could they take part in the conversation? is the question that rises to the mind.

The answer is found in the words of Jesus in verse 9. He charged Peter, James and John, saying, "Tell the *vision* to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." It was a *vision*, not a real visitation from Moses and Elias, that they saw. Jesus was a real person; Peter, James and John were real persons; Moses and Elias on the mount were appearances, but not substantial persons. Visions in which the prophets have themselves borne a part are by no means uncommon in the Scriptures, the other participants in such visions sometimes being figurative beasts or creatures, impossible in a real or natural sense, but emblematic of great realities to be accomplished. John on the isle of Patmos was himself an actor in some of the visions he describes.—Rev. 4: 6-8; 5: 1-9; 6: 1, 3, 5, 7; 10: 8-10; 13: 1, 2, 5, 6.

Having the express word of the Lord that this occurrence was a *vision*, it is clear that there is no conflict between it and the plain statements of Scripture, which show that the dead are really dead, that they know not anything, and must sleep until the resurrection.

Peter, one of the eye witnesses of the vision, described it as a vision of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His majesty. He also said that the effect of this vision, and of hearing the voice

from heaven, was to make the word of prophecy "more sure," so that God's people might have implicit confidence in all the prophecies of the coming Kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Pet. 1: 16-19; R.V.

### **Elijah Taken up to Heaven**

The question is sometimes asked, "Was not Elijah taken to heaven in the chariot of fire, and so ushered, without dying, into God's presence?"—2 Kings 2: 1-11.

At first sight, this narrative would seem a formidable contradiction of our Lord's word—"No man hath ascended up to heaven" (John 3: 13), but the solution of the apparent difficulty is at once made clear when the student remembers the variety of ways in which the word "heaven" is Scripturally used. There are the heaven in which God dwells (Isa. 66: 1); the heaven in which the stars shine (Gen. 1: 14-17); the heaven in which the birds fly, that is, the air (Gen. 1: 20, 26); and "heaven" used symbolically to represent a portion of the "world" or order of things. From John 3: 13, we are obliged to deduce that Elijah did not go up to the first of these heavens, where God dwells; and there is no reason to believe that he was taken to some place in the astronomical heavens; but it is perfectly feasible to believe that he was taken up into the air, where the fowl of heaven fly. Elisha saw Elijah thus taken away into the air, but, as our Lord's word plainly intimates, he did not enter the Divine Presence. In order to view Elijah's experience in harmony with other Scriptures, we must consider that he died, while being taken up, and has since been asleep. This experience of Elijah may

be taken as illustrative of the taking away of the last of the joint heirs with Christ—"We who are alive and remain." The fiery chariot and the whirlwind in which Elijah was taken are symbols of the trouble and distress of nations with which this age is closing, and in which the Lord is gathering His own to Himself. More of this in succeeding pages.

### **Enoch Translated**

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him." "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."—Heb. 11: 5; Gen. 5: 22.

Nothing in these texts says that Enoch was taken to heaven; nothing in them says that he did not die, and Heb. 11: 13 would seem to include Enoch with the others mentioned when it says, "These all died in faith." Again remembering our Lord's words in John 3: 13, the student is guarded against supposing that Enoch was taken to heaven. Referring to Gen. 5: 22, we are told that "he was not," which is another way of saying that he had ceased to live. The expressions "was not," "were not" and "are not" are used in Psalm 37: 36; Jer. 31: 15; Matt. 2: 18 to denote death. That he was translated (set over) without seeing death should therefore be understood as meaning that his end came so suddenly that he had no warning or intimation of its approach. The people of his time were very long-lived; compared with others, he was taken at his prime, and probably had experienced little of the aches and pains which accompany death. The Lord "took him" in the same way that He received the spirit of Stephen, when that martyr fell asleep. He took their power to

live, preserving their characteristics in His own records until such time as the resurrection should call them forth. In the same manner, the spirit, breath, or power to live, of all human beings "returns to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12: 7), to remain in His keeping until the resurrection, when the power to live shall again be bestowed. This "spirit" is not, as we have already seen, a separate personality, which consciously lives apart from the body, but it is the breath of life, which God placed in the first man's nostrils (Gen. 2: 7), and by reason of which the man "became a living soul" or being.

### **King Saul and the Witch of En-dor**

In 1 Samuel 28 is related the experience of Saul with the witch of En-dor. Saul had been most desirous of knowing how his affairs would go, but could get no answer from the Lord. (Verse 6.) Therefore he sought out this "witch," who belonged to a class with which Israel was not permitted to have dealings, or to allow to live (Exod. 22: 18; Lev. 19: 31; 20: 27; Deut. 18: 10, 11; Isa. 8: 19), and which, moreover, Saul had put out of the land. (Verse 3.) The medium asked Saul whom she should bring up, and he said, Samuel; and influenced by her description, Saul "*perceived* that it was Samuel." It cannot be supposed that power would be given to a "witch," one of the prohibited class, to raise Samuel from death; for if the Lord would not answer Saul when he called upon Him in the appointed ways, much less would He answer through a spiritualistic medium. What the woman "saw" and Saul "*perceived*" was not Samuel, but a



counterfeit of him, impersonated by a fallen angel—one of those who had been disobedient in Noah's days, but was now "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Samuel had fallen asleep; and, being dead, he could neither know nor tell anything. He had before his death prophesied that the kingdom should be taken from Saul; this was known to the evil spirit, which impersonated Samuel, and was referred to in the warning that was given to Saul. It seems also that the evil spirit was correct in saying that the battle should go against Israel, and that Saul should be slain. It could not have been otherwise, since God had at last definitely withdrawn His favour from Saul, in refusing to hear or to answer him.

### **Body, Soul and Spirit**

"I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. 5: 23.

That the Apostle was not praying thus on behalf of individual believers, consecrated to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is evident from several considerations. (1) The prayer has not been so answered; no believer has been preserved alive through the Gospel Age. (2) It would not be consistent with the consecration of the believer's body as a living sacrifice, to have it preserved. If the Apostle's prayer be regarded as for the Church as a whole, it is readily understood, for the True Church has been preserved through the age, notwithstanding many attacks against it. The Holy Spirit has been preserved to it; its soul or life has not died;

it has also been preserved as a body. The membership has never been recognisable by the world, for the world has not known them, even as it knew not the Head of that body, Jesus our Lord; but God has known them, and therefore His foundation has stood sure. (2 Tim. 2: 19). The Apostle's prayer has been answered on behalf of the Church collectively, as it could not have been, and was not intended to be, answered on behalf of any member individually.

### **Dives and Lazarus**

— Luke 16: 19-31. —

This is the concluding parable of a group of five running through Luke 15 and 16. The reason for giving this series is stated in Luke 15: 1, 2—"Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, 'This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.'" The Pharisees and scribes were hardening their hearts against the truth preached by our Lord, while the publicans and sinners were more often sufficiently humble to receive the truth gladly, and to reform their lives in harmony with it. The opportunity to enter the race for the high calling and joint heirship in the Kingdom was being proclaimed to the Jewish people. The scribes and Pharisees were not only indisposed to enter, but they sought to prevent others who were willing to enter. (Matt. 23: 13.) One of their special grievances against the Lord Jesus was on account of His willingness to receive all sincere penitents, regardless of their social position, while at the same time He exposed the real wickedness of the hypocritical ones who trusted in themselves that they

were righteous, not needing repentance. The group of parables now under consideration is a specially good example of our Lord's attitude. Beginning most mildly, with the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Silver Piece, it carries the reader on through the parables of the Lost Son and the Unjust Steward, until the grand climax is reached in the last of the group, and the end awaiting the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, as well as the blessing reserved for the penitent publicans and sinners, is vividly portrayed, by the symbolism of The Rich Man and Lazarus.

In Luke 15: 3-7 and 8-10, our Lord justifies His conduct by illustrations which must have appealed to all the right minded among His hearers. If a man have lost one sheep out of a hundred, or a woman one of her ten silver pieces, the lost one claims more interest and attention than the others, and great rejoicing is made when it is found. Similarly, there is more joy in heaven over one of these repentant publicans or sinners than over ninety and nine scribes and Pharisees who in their own estimation are just, and need no repentance. This was mildly sarcastic against the just-in-their-own-eyes, but it must have given great joy to the sincerely repentant.

### **The Prodigal Son**

In verses 11-32, that most beautiful and touching of all parables, our Lord further justified His position by depicting the depth of sin and misery into which the prodigal son had fallen, and the gladness with which the father had received him again. So, although the publicans and sinners had wasted their substance spiritual in "riotous living," and had even associated

themselves with the Gentiles, it pleased God to receive them with gladness on their sincere repentance. Not only was He pleased to receive them, but He also made a feast of spiritual good things for them; and just as the father in the parable bestowed on his repentant, returning son the best robe, the ring and the shoes, so did the heavenly Father bestow on the repentant publicans and sinners the best robe of righteousness (that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, much superior to that of the Law), the hope of immortality in the high calling just then being opened up (a ring or circle, being endless, symbolizes immortality), and the shoes, the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, wearing which their walk and conversation would be better than it had been.

In this parable the murmuring scribes and Pharisees are represented by the elder son, who would not take part in the merry-making, but in a discontented spirit boasted of his righteousness and long service to the father. The kindness and long suffering of God toward the Pharisees are shown in this, that the privileges were all theirs, as well, and they were desired to partake of them ("All that I have is thine"), and to rejoice in the return of the penitents. The Pharisees and scribes should have appreciated this, and should have taken the lesson to heart; but they were not so disposed; therefore the Lord proceeded, in the parable of

### **The Unjust Steward**

(Luke 16: 1-15), to show them the effect of the wrong use of their superior position and privileges as stewards of the divine favours, as far as the Law had revealed them.—Matt. 23: 1-3.

The scribes are here represented as standing between God and the people, as the steward in the parable stood between his lord and the debtors. The steward was wise; when he realised that his office was about to be taken from him, he made friends with the debtors, by writing off portions of their debts, so that they would be ready to favour him when he was cast out. Here was an intimation to the scribes. They, sitting in Moses' seat, had unjustly bound grievous burdens on the backs of the people. They had imposed burden upon burden by means of their traditions, which made the word of God of none effect. To have relieved the people of these weights of tradition would have been no more than just, and it would have been a wise policy for them to adopt, seeing they were about to be cast out of the stewardship; but, instead of conceding anything, they sought all the more to justify themselves, and thus made themselves more abominable in God's sight.—Luke 16: 15.

### **The Rich Man and The Beggar**

Finally, the superior position of the Pharisees and scribes (rich in spiritual things, clothed in purple and fine linen, representing their own estimate of their righteousness and hopes of royalty, and faring sumptuously every day—Psalm 69: 22; Rom. 11: 9) is contrasted with the outcast, beggarly condition of the publicans and sinners (poor in spiritual things, lying at the gate of the "rich man," and desiring to be fed with some crumbs of the favour so bountifully enjoyed by the "rich man"—Rom. 3: 1, 2). Knowing that the scribes and Pharisees would not accept the good advice

offered them by means of the parable of The Unjust Steward, the Lord now makes a positive prediction of the course of events, and by means of the picture of the deaths of the beggar and the rich man shows the changes that were to come in the circumstances of the self-righteous Pharisee class and the penitent class of despised publicans and sinners.

The latter, dying to their unfavourable spiritual conditions, were to be carried by "angels" (messengers of truth) into "Abraham's bosom"; they would by this change come into line to inherit the good things of divine favour expressed in the Abrahamic promise. The Pharisees boasted of their lineage, not realising that fleshly descent from Abraham would profit them nothing, if their hearts were not right. When their class, as a class, "died" to their favourable circumstances, it, as a class, was "buried." How accurately this describes the condition of the scribes and their sympathisers for nearly twenty centuries! They have been "buried" beneath the social "earth"; every nation has crushed them down, and while in this hades or covered or buried condition, they have been in most grievous torments.

In an earlier portion of this study, we have seen that the condition of dead *persons* is such that they know nothing and feel nothing. Many scriptures indicate this plainly, and we must not suppose that our Lord would contradict the straightforward utterances of the Old Testament, which He constantly quoted as the Divine Word. By recognising that our Lord was in this parable depicting the fortunes of two *classes*, as carried through the group of parables beginning with

that of The Lost Sheep, the perfect harmony between Him and the Old Testament is clearly discerned.

While in his "torment," the "rich man" class apprehends something of what he has lost and the "beggar" has gained. The Jews realise that they are under the divine disfavour; they also know that they are in many nations socially beneath the "earth," and without doubt they realise that they have been tormented in the "flame" of trouble which destroyed their city and polity in A.D. 70, and which has been "burning" them ever since. They call to "Father Abraham" for relief, but God refuses to send it, not even a drop of the cool water of truth to relieve their distress. This, however, is not on account of vindictiveness on God's part, though the "rich man" is reminded that circumstances once were different. The hardness of heart of the Pharisee and scribe class and their sympathisers has caused a "great gulf" of prejudice to be "fixed" between them and those who have entered into the divine favour ("Abraham's bosom"), so that it is practically impossible for spiritual benefits to pass to the Jews. This "gulf" represents also, we understand, the "blindness in part" of Rom. 11: 25, which has been so effective that but few Jews have been converted to Christ since A.D. 70.

Near the close of this most marvellous of parables, in which the great Teacher so wonderfully used the impossible to represent the actual, is found a reference to the written words of Moses and the Prophets. If the "brethren" of the "rich man" (possibly representing the Jews living outside of Palestine at the time of our Lord's ministry) were indisposed to hear

them, neither would they regard the testimony of the "beggar," now received into divine favour, nor of the Gentiles who have been received into favour with him, having been raised from the death state of trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2: 5, 6.) This should be to us an intimation of the reverence we are to render to God's Word, as expressed in the Old Testament, and that we are not to suppose that the New Testament contradicts Moses and the Prophets, when they tell us that "the dead know not anything."

### **The Second Death**

In the Garden of Eden, death was pronounced as the penalty for the transgression there committed, and the whole of the Adamic race was involved in it. This was the unfortunate result of the first great Judgment of our race.—Rom. 5: 12, 16.

Another Judgment Day has been appointed, because the Son of God tasted death for every man, thus purchasing the entire race, and having the right to put each individual of the race on trial for life, with the alternative of death to the wilfully disobedient. (1 Peter 1: 18, 19; 1 Cor. 6: 20; Rom. 5: 15, 18, 19; 1 Cor. 15: 21, 22; Acts 17: 30, 31; 3: 23.) The death which is a possibility of this great Judgment is called the Second Death. Whereas the possibility of complete deliverance from the Adamic penalty is to be put within reach of all because of the Redeemer's death, there is no hope of release for those who may be condemned to the Second Death; it will be final, because none will be sentenced to it until after it has been determined that the character is wilfully opposed to God and



righteousness. A thousand thousand re-trials would not alter such a case; therefore none will be granted.

The Judgment which has for its alternatives eternal life and eternal death is going on now, in some cases. Each one who has been enlightened comes under a measure of responsibility, and some who have enjoyed a great deal of light are thereby brought under very much responsibility, so that wilfulness on their part would involve them in utter destruction without hope of remedy. (Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 2, 3; 6: 4-6; 10: 26-31; 12: 25; Acts 3: 23, 26.) Even a small degree of enlightenment is not to be trifled with. Let us therefore be very careful that we be rightly exercised by the divine mercies.—Rom. 12: 1; 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15.

### **Satan in the Second Death**

Second Death does not necessarily imply dying twice. Satan, his sympathisers among the angels and all his evil systems of superstition are to be destroyed by it, though they have not previously died. (Matt. 25: 41, 46.) Thus is shown the fact that the significance of "second" as attached to this death is not in the number of times the transgressor dies, but in that it is the condemnation which may be pronounced as a result of the second great Judgment, which will include heavenly, as well as earthly, beings, also false systems.—Eph. 1: 10; Col. 1: 20; 2 Tim. 4: 1.

Throughout the book of Revelation (2: 9, 13; 12: 3, 9, 12; 20: 2, 7, 10) the name "Satan" is applied to a political system, of which we hope to say more on another occasion. In Rev. 20: 10, this "Satan" system is mentioned with two other systems ("Beast" and

"False Prophet"—Rev. 19: 20) as being tormented forever and ever in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death. The "Beast" and "False Prophet" are cast into the burning lake at the end of the Gospel age; the "Satan" system at the end of the Kingdom age. Since systems have no nerves, they cannot feel pain; this passage must therefore be viewed as strongly figurative, describing the severe dealings of the Lord with all systems of evil, looking to their utter destruction.

### Everlasting Punishment

The "everlasting punishment" mentioned in Matt. 25: 46 is not to be understood as everlasting pain. When a criminal is executed by sentence of an earthly court, his punishment is everlasting, or permanent, as far as men can make it so, but his pain is not everlasting, nor is it intended to be so. What the "everlasting punishment" of the wilfully wicked is to be is plainly stated in 2 Thes. 1: 9—they "shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*"; not everlasting *destroying*, an interminable process, but everlasting *destruction*, a completed work, the Second Death.

In Matt. 25: 46, the adjectives "everlasting" and "eternal" are translations of the Greek *aionios*, derived from *aion*, meaning "age." As already shown, this Greek word and its Hebrew equivalent, *olam*, do not always mean "endless." But in Matt. 25: 46 there can be no doubt that endlessness, in respect of both the life of the blessed and the punishment of the condemned, is meant.

The word translated "punishment" is *kolasin*. It means "cutting off," and thus plainly indicates the nature of the punishment to be meted out to the wilfully wicked, expressing precisely what has been seen in 2 Thes. 1: 9, that "everlasting punishment" means permanent destruction without hope of recovery. They shall be "blotted out"—"destroyed from among the people." (Psalm 69: 28; Acts 3: 23.) If, after receiving the enlightenment and opportunity provided for in the Divine Purpose (John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6), sin be persisted in, "The wicked shall *return* to Sheol." (Psalm 9: 17, R.V.) That we all may be so commended to God in Christ Jesus as to escape this fate is our earnest prayer.

"I will Ransom them  
 From the Power of the Grave;  
 I will Redeem them from Death:  
 O Death, I will be thy Plagues;  
 O Grave, I will be thy Destruction."

"Fear not them which Kill the Body,  
 But are not able to Kill the Soul;  
 But rather Fear Him which is  
 Able to Destroy both Soul and Body  
 In Gehenna"—Second Death.

—Hosea 13: 14; Matt. 10: 28; Ezek. 18: 4.

## Hail to the Brightness

Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning!  
Joy to the lands that in darkness have lain!  
Hushed be the accents of sorrow and mourning!  
Zion in triumph begins her glad reign.

Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning,  
Long by the prophets of Israel foretold!  
Hail to the millions from bondage returning!  
Gentiles and Jews the blest vision behold.

See, in the desert rich flowers are springing;  
Streams ever copious are gliding along;  
Loud from the mountain tops echoes are ringing,  
Wastes rise in verdure and mingle in song.

See the dead risen from land and from ocean;  
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;  
Fall'n are the engines of war and commotion;  
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky.

— *Author Unknown.*

## XI.

# Our Lord's Return

"If I go, I will come again."—John 14: 3.

**C**HRISTIANS of all persuasions are agreed in believing that our Saviour promised to return to earth. "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead" is a sentiment familiar to Catholic and Protestant. No time need be taken, therefore, to cite proofs of this, our Lord's intention. It is, however, to be regretted that this expectation, though publicly professed in many congregations every Sunday, has fallen upon a season of much neglect, whereas in the Apostolic days it was the great hope of God's people, cheering and sustaining them in much affliction and distress. "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. . . . Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thes. 1: 9, 10; 4: 16-18.

The reason why the early Church was so deeply interested in the Lord's return was that their hope and expectation of seeing Him and sharing His glory could not be realised until then (1 John 3: 2; Col. 3: 4); besides which the reign of Christ and the Church over the nations could not begin until His second advent. (Matt. 25: 31; Rom. 8: 19-22.) Scriptural teaching

on this subject is now sadly neglected, present-day Christians not realising, as did the early Church, that the fulfilment of the Church's every hope for herself, and on behalf of the world, is made dependent on the Lord's return. Many Christians now think that they immediately pass into glory at death, and therefore the Lord's return is not necessary in order that they might be with Him. Having no expectation of blessing for the world in connection with the second advent of Christ, but having a fearful looking for of disaster and eternal woe for those unconverted in the day of His return, it is not surprising that they see no beauty nor desirability in the event, and therefore think as little as possible about it. What else could be expected in the circumstances? Even among those who realise that the doctrine of our Lord's return occupies a most prominent position in the divine Word, there are many whose anticipations in respect to that event are gloomy enough to discourage them altogether. There is no "silver lining" to their cloud. All the more cause have those whose eyes have been opened to see some of the wonderful things in the Bible to thank God for the light now shining into the open minds of all who call upon Him in sincerity.

The Scriptural teaching, showing that the purpose of our Lord's return is to receive His Bride and to bless all nations, has perhaps been sufficiently examined in previous chapters. The present study will therefore be devoted to the Manner of His advent, and subsequent manifestations, the correct understanding of which is most essential, in order that we may not fail to recognise the day of our visitation.

### The Disciples' Question

"What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24: 3.) The significance of this question of the disciples is unfortunately obscured by the mistranslation of two important words. The word "world" is a translation of the Greek word *aion*, which, as already noted, means "age," or a period of time. The disciples did not ask our Lord about the destruction of the earth; they did not expect such an event. They did expect the age to end, and concerning this they asked Him. The word "coming" in Matt. 24: 3 is a mistranslation of the word *parousia*, which means "presence," as being alongside of. "Coming" is the travelling preceding arrival; arrival is at that moment when the coming is finished; presence is the remaining at a place after coming is completed and arrival is accomplished. The differences between these words need to be clearly comprehended, and always observed, if we would understand the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the manner of our Lord's return.

The word "parousia" occurs twenty-four times in the Greek New Testament. Twenty-two times it is mistranslated "coming" in the Authorised Version. The Revised Version corrects the error to the extent of giving in the margin the correct word, "presence," in every case where another word is used in the ordinary text. The following are all the texts in which the word "parousia" occurs. Read them all, substituting "presence" for "coming," and observe the difference in the sense.—Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15: 23; 16: 17; 2 Cor. 7: 6, 7; 10: 10; Phil. 1: 26; 2: 12; 1 Thes.

2: 19; 3: 13; 4: 15; 5: 23; 2 Thes. 2: 1, 8, 9; James 5: 7, 8; 2 Peter 1: 16; 3: 4, 12; 1 John 2: 28.

Let it be understood, then, that the disciples' question was, "What shall be the sign of thy *presence*, and of the end of the *age*?" They did not ask to know the sign of His coming, by which they might realise that He was on the way; neither did they ask to know the sign of His arrival; they desired to know how they might be able to recognise the fact of His *presence*. The reason for such a question will be apparent when it is remembered that the manner of our Lord's first advent was so different from the expectation in the Jewish mind that the faithful of those days had great difficulty in realising the fact of Messiah's *presence* among them. They had expected a great warrior; instead they were called upon to acknowledge the meek and lowly Jesus as the One sent of God. They had expected a king; instead there came one who was servant of all, and who washed their feet. Is it strange, then, that they asked the Saviour, "What shall be the sign of Thy *presence*, and of the *end of the age*?" Would that God's people of the present day were all as deeply interested in this subject as were the disciples.

Many of those ardently longing for the Lord's second advent have been intently looking for signs of His *coming*, whereas it appears from the disciples' question and our Lord's answer that they should rather seek to know the sign of His actual *presence*. A too literal interpretation of some figurative expressions used in describing our Lord's second advent, and the unfortunate mistranslation of "*parousia*" in nearly every instance of its occurrence, have done much to



lodge unscriptural ideas in the minds of many dear children of God, so that they do not realise the necessity for looking for signs of Christ's *presence*, their thought being that the fact of His presence will be unmistakably known to the whole world at the moment of His arrival. They therefore seek to interpret every "sign" as an indication of the imminence of the second advent, whereas some, at least, of the "signs" are given to indicate that the second advent will be an accomplished fact when the "sign" is manifest.

### The Lord's Reply

Traversing the entire Gospel age in His reply, our Lord pointed out many things to the disciples. He told them there should be wars and rumours of wars; they were not to be troubled over these, because, while all these things must come to pass, "the end is not yet." He told them also (Matt 24: 9) that they should be delivered up to be afflicted, and that all nations should hate them for His Name's sake. Many false prophets should arise, and should deceive many. How can we identify these? There have been occasional false prophets, such as Mr. Dowie, who have deceived comparatively few, all told. Where are the *many* false prophets who should deceive *many*? That charge must, we fear, be laid against the false teachers of Christendom generally, who for centuries have deceived many—themselves often included—with eternal torment and other false teachings. Besides these, the occasional leaders astray of small followings have been as nothing.

The Lord also warned His disciples against those who might teach that He would be in the desert or in

the secret chambers. Whether this was directed against the hermits and monastics of the middle ages, or against the demonstrations of latter day Spiritualism, which has sometimes, we understand, claimed to have Christ present at its seances, or whether directed against both, this is at least a warning against endeavouring to localise our Lord's second presence, as some have sought to do.

As evidence that the Master was using much figurative language in this discourse, the reader is referred to vss. 29-31, followed as they are by "Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things [mentioned in vss. 29-31], know that he is near, even at the doors"—*present*. "Verily I say unto you, this generation [which sees these things] shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

### **Knew Not— Know Not**

Attention is specially requested to vss. 37-39. In this passage, the word "*parousia*" occurs twice, and is mistranslated "*coming*" both times. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the *presence* of the Son of man be. For, as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and *knew not* until the flood came, and took them all away, so shall also the *presence* of the Son of Man be." Thus did our Lord intimate to the disciples, and for our learning, that His second presence at first would be a secret, unknown to the world and to all except

those who, like Noah, had "eyes of faith." Such a thought does not surprise the student, for he remembers that the risen Lord was invisibly present with the disciples for forty days before His ascension, though he manifested His presence only a few times. Bearing in mind what we have found in our previous studies of the Word, that the faithful consecrated may hope to see our Lord "as He is," not as He was, and that He is now dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 John 3: 2; 1 Tim. 6: 14-16), so that Saul of Tarsus, who saw our Lord's glory, could do so only by a miracle, we are not surprised even at our Lord's words, spoken shortly before His crucifixion, "Yet a little while, and the *world* seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live ye shall live also." (John 14: 19.) This has been literally fulfilled; after our Lord's resurrection He was not manifested to the world, but only to chosen witnesses. (Acts 10: 40, 41.) Remembering also that at His first presence faith was required in order to recognise Him and admit His claim to be the Messiah, one need not be surprised that the recognition, at first, of the fact of His second presence would be as impossible for the world and for worldly-minded Christendom as was the recognition of His first presence impossible for hard-hearted Judaism, and one will recognise the force of our Lord's comparison of the days of His presence with the days before the flood—"they knew not."

Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," was not silent while the ark was building. The people of his day must have been fully forewarned of the impending calamity. Likewise our Lord's first presence was not

without demonstrations of divine truth and power, in preaching and miracles, continued after his ascension by the apostles and believers, so that the professed people of God of that time were warned of the impending "wrath to come" (Matt. 3: 7; 23: 36-38; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16), and of the way of escape by acceptance of Jesus. It is certain also that the first portion of our Saviour's second presence will not be without some attending "signs" that will enable the eye of faith to recognise what the eye of flesh is not to see. But just as unbelief prevented the people of Noah's day from making their escape in the ark, and as unbelief hindered the Jews from accepting Christ, and thus averting the "wrath" which came upon them in A.D. 70, so will unbelief hinder Christendom from recognising the fact of the *parousia* of Christ, and will bring upon it the world-wide time of trouble, "Such as never was since there was a nation," which is associated with Messiah's standing up to take His power and reign over the nations.—Daniel 12: 1; Matt. 24: 21, 22.

The parallel passage to Matt. 24: 37-39 is Luke 17: 26, 27—"And as it was *in the days of Noah*, so shall it be also *in the days of the Son of Man*." Without using the word "presence," this record of our Lord's discourse presents the thought. "The days of Noah" were not days shortly before Noah's time; "the days of the Son of man" are not days shortly preceding His second advent, but are days of His actual presence. How attentive all His people should be; how watchful, lest the slightest indication of the *presence* of the Son of man escape notice; how careful, lest, like the Jews,

we should fail to recognise the day of our visitation! For failure on this score will surely mean the outer darkness of error for those whose eyes are closed; it will surely mean the keenest of regrets for such, when they realise their mistake.

### **Not With Observation**

The teaching of the invisible presence of the Lord in His Kingdom is expressed in Luke 17: 20, 21—"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them, and said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation [margin, "with outward show"]; neither shall they say 'Lo here!' or 'lo there!' for behold the Kingdom of God is within [margin, "among"] you." The propriety of the marginal reading, "among you," is immediately evident, when it is remembered that our Lord was addressing the Pharisees, of whom He said they were "whited sepulchers, full of dead men's bones." He would not have said that the Kingdom of God was within them, in the sense of being in their hearts. But just as Satan's kingdom is among men, exercising its powerful influence for evil over their affairs, so the Kingdom of God, in the person of Jesus, the King, and heir of David's throne, was among them; likewise when the "strong man" shall be bound, the Kingdom of God, with Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords, will be invisibly present, "among you," exercising its great power for good, and for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Our Lord's second presence will, we believe, be of a thousand years' duration. (Rev. 20: 4.) The be-

ginning of that thousand years does not wait until all the world is converted, or even enlightened; if it had to wait for that, He would never come, if affairs were to continue as at present. He Himself intimated that faith would be rare in the earth at the beginning of His parousia (Luke 18: 8), and the Holy Spirit expressly declared the same through the Apostle.—1 Tim. 4: 1.

### **Our Lord's Parousia In the Harvest**

The close of the Gospel Age and the beginning of the Kingdom Age are arranged to overlap, just as it has been seen that the close of the Jewish Age overlapped the beginning of the Gospel Age; so that another period of "ends of the ages" (1 Cor. 10: 11) is to be experienced by God's people. The end of the Gospel Age is a "harvest" time, separating the wheat from the tares. This requires our Lord's presence to oversee the work, as He said in His parable—"The harvest is the end of the age. So shall it be in the end of the age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels (messengers), and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity." (Matt. 13: 39-41.) As the disciples were permitted to act as Christ's messengers in the harvest of the Jewish Age, so His people on earth are honoured with the privilege of being His "angels" or messengers in the Harvest of the Gospel Age, separating the "wheat" and "tares" which have grown together in the "field"—the world—until the separating time should come. A work of this magnitude requires time; the "harvest" of the Gospel Age is therefore not to be thought of as the last day of the age, but as a period

of time. The Jewish "harvest" was a period of forty years; the Gospel Age harvest is, we believe, of similar duration.

### **Wheat and Tares**

The Harvest is a time of much testing and sifting among those who have named the name of Christ; and truth now due—"present truth"—to the household of faith is the means of separating, just as in the Jewish harvest the truth then due and preached by the Lord and the apostles was the separating influence—the "fan" with which He purged the threshing-floor. (Matt. 3: 12.) The feature of truth which was the greatest stumbling block in the Jewish harvest period was the Cross of Christ; over it the unbelieving stumbled into "outer darkness" and "blindness in part." Those who put their trust in Him were not confounded, but were brought into intimate fellowship with God through Him. In the end of the Gospel Age the Cross of Christ is again the feature of "present truth," which serves as the principal test to determine who are "wheat" and who are "tares," and to separate them from each other. Everyone who has followed the trend of events in the last twenty-five years can observe how this is so. Multitudes of professing Christians openly say that they see no need of any sacrifice to propitiate divine Justice on their behalf, and are thus stumbling over the Cross, which is to them an offence. Others, still jealous for the Cross, associate with it the errors of eternal torment, etc., which practically make the Cross of none effect; so they stumble, misleading others, and causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of. (2 Peter 2: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 1: 18-24; 1 Peter 2: 4-8.)

These repudiators, direct and indirect, of the Cross of Christ, in the presence of the King (Matt. 22: 11), are of the "tares," who are being bound into their various "bundles" of sectarianism of one sort or another, for the "burning" of the impending time of trouble, which shall destroy the bundles and burn up the "tares," returning them again to the "field," the world.—Matt. 13: 42; Jer. 11: 4.

Those who cling to the Cross, through evil report and through good report, are also gathered, but not into sectarian bundles. Just as bees swarm, because they seek to associate themselves with their queen, so these are gathered to the Lord Himself, and thus to each other. These, the "wheat" class, are gathered into the "barn," into joint heirship with their Lord. Then shall they shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom Age, to rule over and bless all nations.—Matt. 13: 43, 30.

### **Our Lord's Parousia As King**

If the ending or harvest of the Gospel Age requires the presence of Jesus as Chief Reaper, so does the beginning of the Kingdom Age require His parousia as King. Since the nations are not to be found by Him in a state of submission to the truth; indeed, since the nations, governmentally considered, cannot be allowed to continue as they are, the first work of God's Kingdom, when coming in power, must be to overthrow the nations. In order to do this, God's Kingdom must be set up before the world kingdoms fall—must be set up in order to make them fall. (Rev. 2: 26, 27; Psalm 149: 5-9.) This is exactly the divine programme, as explained by Daniel to the great king, Nebuchadnezzar.



"In the days of these kings [the last of the world kingdoms represented in the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2: 34, 35, 44, 45.) This informs us that the divine Kingdom and the world kingdoms shall be co-existent on earth for a time, the latter being smitten to their overthrow by the former. Doubtless this is the same period as the harvest already mentioned, so that the closing of the Gospel Age and the beginning of the Kingdom Age may be represented thus—

<b>Gospel Age</b>	<b>Beginning of the Age</b>	<b>Kingdom Age.</b>
	Dan. 2: 44.	
	<b>Harvest or End of the Age.</b> Matt. 13: 39.	

The saints on earth have the privilege of acting as harvest messengers or angels, to separate "wheat" from "tares." The saints in glory, raised from the dead, and made like their Lord, no longer flesh, but now born of the Spirit, have the privilege of dashing the nations to pieces like a potter's vessel. (John 3: 5-8; 1 John 3: 2; Rev. 2: 26, 27.) Those in the flesh may see the results, but cannot trace the operations of the glorified ones. Doubtless, those who are now agitating against the present social order are quite in ignorance of whose influence, invisibly exerted, it is with which they co-operate in their own revolutionary

way. Though God is not in all the thoughts of present day social agitators, He is using them for the accomplishment of some of His purposes, overruling their violence to His own glory.

### **His Presence Revealed to the Saints**

The fact of our Lord's presence, and that the kingdom of this world, formerly under Satan, has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (Rev. 11: 15, R.V.), must in time be made known to all men. For the purpose of the present question, these may be divided into two classes—the saints and others. The methods used to reveal His presence to these classes are as different as the classes themselves.

To the saints, eagerly watching for the "sign," His presence will be revealed as that of the rising sun is made known to him who is not asleep. The sun in his rising does not come with trumpets and drums, but noiselessly, at the appointed time, he begins to shine. He who is awake before break of day will hear the first twitters of the rousing birds, he will be conscious that in the east the darkness is changing to grey, and presently to gorgeous hues, and finally the sun himself appears. The sleeper will be all unconscious of this, and the sun may be far on his upward journey before he wakes to a realisation that day has dawned.

Thus is the manner of our Lord's revealing of His presence to the saints described—"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24: 27.) The mistranslation of *parousia* by "coming" occurs in this verse as well as in vss. 3, 37, 39. The

word "lightning" is a curious mistranslation, because lightning does not invariably shine from the east to the west, though the sun does. "Lightning" in this verse is a mistranslation of the word *astrape*, which occurs again in Luke 11: 36, where it is rendered "bright shining," as it should be in Matt. 24: 27, which, with these obvious corrections, would read—"For as the bright shining cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be." The thought is also expressed in Luke 17: 24, where the word *astrape* is similarly mistranslated "lightning," when it should be "bright shining."

Thus, quietly as the sun's rising, is the fact of the Parousia—presence—of the Lord to be brought to the realisation of the watching saints. To them will appear "the sign of the Son of man in heaven" before others see it, because others will be asleep, while they will be awake. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. (Matt. 24: 29, 30.) The "tribulation" is understood to mean the times of distress, experienced by God's people during the 1260 years of Papal domination, ending with the close of the eighteenth century. Since then, the Gospel sun has become dark in Christendom, by reason of higher criticism and other vain philosophies; the Law moon does not give her light, and for many it is now "turned to blood." The stars—prominent religious teachers—have been falling from the "heaven" of spiritual things and religious in-

fluence to the "earth" of political and social affairs, busying themselves with "social uplift" movements and the like. The powers of the "heavens"—the influence and stability of Christendom's religious and ecclesiastical organisations—are being shaken. That so much has been fulfilled and is daily being fulfilled is patent to all. Our Lord said, "*Then shall appear the sign,*" the very thing the disciples asked to know; it would not be a sign of His coming, but of His *presence*. In the heavens of ecclesiasticism it would appear, and the gathering of His elect to Himself, as He had gathered the disciples during His first presence, is the sign, as stated in v. 31.

We have seen that the harvest of the Gospel Age would require the presence of the Lord to direct the work. Now we can see that the carrying forward of that work is the sign of the Son of man in the "heaven" of ecclesiasticism. "From one end of heaven to the other," from every quarter of ecclesiasticism—Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and all—God's people who have ears and eyes for "present truth" are being gathered to an appreciation of it, just as were the Israelites indeed in the Jewish Age harvest. "Whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (v. 28.) Wherever the food is, there will the hungry ones gather to it.

Whoever realises that the "Harvest" time is here, and that the work of the Harvest is here, should also realise the grand fact which this indicates, viz., the presence of the Master in this, the end of the age. Thank God for this realisation! It means that the time of trial and testing is upon God's professed people,

to determine who are really His and who are not. This may mean more than we have known hitherto of separation from others, but separation is one of the principal operations of the harvest time. The wheat and the tares must be separated from each other, because the tares are not to be garnered. May the tests of the "harvest" time determine each reader of these words to be true wheat!

### **His Presence Revealed to the World**

In a much less gentle but not less decisive manner will the fact of our Lord's presence be manifest to the world and worldly Christians, and they shall mourn when they see Him "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."—Matt. 24: 30; Rev. 1: 7.

How can these words last cited be found to agree with John 14: 19, which records our Saviour's words, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more?" By remembering that the eye of flesh is not the only organ of "sight." Even a blind man sometimes "sees" things, and all of us, when a problem is demonstrated to our understanding, are in the habit of saying, "I see." How many times has the reader said, "I see," when physical sight was not at all in question? So the world, when the time of trouble, symbolised by the "clouds," gets very severe, will begin to realise that the new King, Jesus, is taking to Himself His great power to reign, and that His Kingdom is smiting, surely though invisibly, the kingdoms of this world to their overthrow. The time of trouble will be the revelation to the world of the parousia—presence—of the King of kings and Lord of lords. "They shall see the Son of

man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory"; "every eye shall see Him."

The Apostle Paul gives like testimony concerning the manner of Jesus' revealing. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire," etc. Here, as in many other passages, the coming trouble is mentioned under the figure of "fire." In and by this fiery trouble, which will be such as the world has never known, the *presence* of Jesus will be revealed to the world. Not that the world will see Him with the eyes of their flesh; they will realise the fact of His presence, by the sight of their eyes of understanding, just as the saints are to *discern* the fact of His presence as it were the dawning of a beautiful day.

Before they properly learn their lesson, the poor world will undoubtedly have a most distressing time. But, thanks be to God, after the trouble is over, and the eyes of their understanding are opened, they will realise Who it is that has dealt so severely with them, and that the severe trial of the time of trouble was necessary, in order that they might be brought to their senses. Then, when the Good Physician shall apply balm to their wounds and sores, they will be glad for the cure He has brought, and will thank Him for the severe treatment at first administered. The "smiting" by the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands" has not yet gone far enough for the world to recognise it; but soon they will begin to "see." Even now the hearts of some men great and wise in this world's affairs are

failing them for fear and for looking after the things they see coming on the nations; but as yet they do not see Him in the trouble clouds.

**The Shout**  
**The Voice and**  
**The Trumpet**

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."—1 Thes. 4: 16; compare Matt. 24: 31; 1 Cor. 15: 52.

Some are inclined to take an extremely literal view of the "shout," "voice of the archangel" and "trump of God" mentioned in these verses, and to suppose that our Lord's arrival at His second advent will be accompanied by tremendous demonstrations of audible sounds. If this were to be so, His presence could not be a secret one for a time, because the whole world would at once know all about it; yet our Lord distinctly compares the days of His presence with the days of Noah—"they *knew not*." We are to harmonise Scriptures, and we must not set one passage against another, and choose between them. It is therefore our duty to seek an understanding of this Scripture which will not cause it to conflict with others.

Considering first "the trump of God," we refer to Rev. 11: 15. This tells of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is evidently the one referred to in 1 Thes. 4: 16, since both have to do with the Second Advent of Christ and the setting up of the Kingdom. The seventh trumpet is preceded by six, as described in Revelation. Most students agree that at least five or six of these trumpets have sounded, yet not one of them has been heard with the fleshly ear.

If this be true of five or six, it is equally true of the seventh, so that there is no reason to expect a literal trumpet blast to announce our Lord. The "trumpet" is thus seen to be symbolic, and the associated "voice" and "shout" must be similarly understood, if we desire to avoid confusion.

Under the "sounding" of the seventh "trumpet" everything pertaining to the Kingdom is to be accomplished, including the gathering of the Lord's saints to Himself from one end of the ecclesiastical "heaven" to the other, the raising of the dead, the rewarding of the prophets, the blessing of all the families of the earth, and the destruction of the finally wilful ones.—Rev. 11: 15-18; Matt. 24: 30.

Descending with the voice of the archangel would be an intimation that our Lord is Himself the archangel or chief messenger, as indeed He is, one of His titles being, "The Messenger of the Covenant." Therefore, all the commands He shall issue and the requirements He shall make will be as the chief messenger of God to the people, and they will need to bow to the divine authority vested in Him, or take the consequences, which, in the case of wilful sin, will be Second Death.

The word translated "shout" in 1 Thes. 4: 16, is *keleuma*, which means "a cry of incitement." When has there been a period in the history of humanity in which more attention was given to looking into the "rights" of men than is now being done? There never was such a time as the present for discussions of these things. What has "incited" them to it? The believer in God's Word will at once recognise the *parousia* of



our Lord as the cause. The people are "hearing" the noiseless "cry of incitement," and are bestirring themselves.

### **"The Dead In Christ Shall Rise First"**

It is not expected that the human bodies of the overcomers will be raised from death, because the joint heirs of Christ are not to be human beings. Did not the Apostle intimate that we have a house eternal in the heavens, not made with hands, to take the place of our earthly tabernacles? The resurrection of the dead in Christ would not mean their appearance on earth. It would mean their exaltation as partakers of the divine nature to be with and like the Lord—heavenly beings, born of the Spirit, and therefore spirit, no longer flesh.—2 Peter 1: 4; 2 Cor. 5: 1; John 3: 6, 8.

### **"Caught Up"**

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes. 4: 17.) Bearing in mind that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15: 50), and that all who are to be forever with the Lord and see Him as He is must be made like Him, we at once see that when the Apostle said "caught up," he did not mean that the fleshly bodies of the overcomers who remain until the *presence* of the Lord (1 Thes. 4: 15) are to be taken up into the atmospheric clouds, to meet the Lord in the circumambient air. He meant, rather, that in the gathering clouds of the approaching time

of trouble, the faithful who had not finished their course before His parousia began would, each as he completed his journey and finished his sacrifice in death, be instantaneously caught up, without having to remain in death for a period, to meet the Lord in the "air"—the region of spiritual influence. Satan is now the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2: 2), but our Lord Jesus is to occupy that position, and will have with Him His joint heirs—"ever with the Lord."

This is the force of the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, "We shall not *all* sleep, but we shall all be changed." Most of the overcomers have slept; but if the "day of visitation" be now upon us, and the parousia (presence) of the Lord be begun, the time has passed when those who finish their course with the Lord's approval must be laid away to remain unconscious for a while. Doubtless the overcomers will die. But since the moment of death will witness their change into His likeness, there will be no sleep for them. Of such it is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." The laborious conditions past, the activities of these blessed ones do not cease; they continue. (Rev. 14: 13, 14.) "From henceforth" indicates a certain point of time, indicated in verse 14 as being the harvest period. Before the harvest time, which we believe is now upon us, the dead who died in the Lord had to sleep; since the harvest has begun, they who die in the Lord, as members of His body, in the likeness of His death, are specially

blessed in that their work does not cease; they are caught up at the moment of death to meet the Lord in the ruling position and to join in the work on the other side of the veil.

Do we clearly realise the times in which we are living? Do conditions in Christendom appeal to us so that the *parousia* of our Lord in this harvest time shines into our hearts and minds as the rising sun? Does the Master Himself furnish our table with the bountiful provision of "meat in due season" such as His saints have never before been privileged to enjoy? Do we realise not only our privileges, but also our responsibilities in this harvest time? Let us be up and doing, as angels of the harvest, giving the good tidings to others, that they may be separated from conditions unfavourable to spiritual welfare, as wheat is separated from tares. Remember that he that "reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."—Luke 12: 37; Matt. 20: 2; 13: 30, 39; John 4: 35, 36.

**Parousia**

Down in the valley late the shadows lie  
Waiting, how long, the coming of the sun;  
Can these dark hours that wheel so slowly by  
Bring hope of dawn when night shall all be done?

Look up! Though still with gloom the vale below  
Is filled, the day upon the mountain height  
Rises already; all the peaks aglow  
Proclaim his presence, heralds of his light.

. . . . .

O watcher for the morning, downcast eyes  
See but the shadows that the earth oppress:  
Look up! already we behold Him rise,  
The dawning of the Sun of Righteousness.

Dark places of the earth, where circling years  
Have seemed to bring no ray to pierce your gloom,  
Lo, on the mountains stand His messengers  
Beaconing to the world: "Thy Light has come."

What of the night? The weary night is past:  
Heralds of Christ, lift up your hearts and gaze  
Sunward, reflecting Him, until the last  
Far lands of darkness catch His healing rays.

A.C.S.

## XII.

### Why is Evil Allowed ?

**C**ONTEMPLATION of the Divine Purpose presented in the foregoing Talks has, it is hoped, almost, if not quite, answered this momentous question, which enters into every one's life; yet a few thoughts directly bearing on the subject may not be amiss.

There are three kinds of evil in the world—moral, physical, and calamitous—all of which it is the lot of every man, woman and child to experience, which youth meets with surprise, but to which middle life and old age become more or less resigned. A few earnest souls battle against evil in the hope of eradicating it and bringing in conditions of health, happiness and general well-being for all mankind, but with only partial success, for it is not as yet God's time.

#### **Calamities**

Calamitous evils, the result of convulsions of nature, are evils only when men stand in their path; for the throwing up of mountain ranges, the altering of the contour of continents, and other phenomena, which from the earliest times have been in process, must be part of the scheme of

the Creator, preparing the earth\* for the final habitation of man in restitution times. (Isa. 45: 18.) The garden in which Adam and Eve found themselves had been specially "planted" in Eden, no doubt as a sheltered spot suitable to a perfect pair whose probation should be under the most favourable conditions. But outside the garden, difficulties of all kinds were experienced—thorns and thistles being one of the smallest and yet the most persistent.

### **Calamities in Israel**

The land of Canaan was subsequently made a fit abode for God's people, the nation of Israel, and under His blessing Nature fulfilled her obligations in sunshine and periodical rains, producing a "land flowing with milk and honey," a land of corn and wine, of the olive and of the fig tree, with none of the disastrous storms common to the rest of the world. As long as they loved God and walked in harmony with the covenant He made with them at Sinai, they prospered; but, as provided for in the same covenant, when they walked contrary to Him, He walked contrary to them,

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\*The general comment on the recent San Franciscan and Sicilian earthquakes is to the effect that if people persist in living in what are known to be earthquake zones, and in building villages on overhanging ledges of rock, or on the slopes of volcanoes, they must suffer loss of life and property when the expected happens. Nevertheless, accidents and calamities are constantly occurring where all due precautions have been taken, and testify both to the unsuitableness in many respects of man's environment, and to his imperfection and inability to grapple with the superior forces of nature. God must and will subdue these under him in due time.—Psa. 8: 6-8; Heb. 2: 6-8.

allowing the storm, the blight and the pestilence to work havoc among them. When they repented of their sins, and cried unto the Lord, He heard them, removed the plagues and restored unto them His favour. (Psalm 106.) This rebelling against God, and returning to Him again, would have worn out the patience of any but a most long-suffering God. (Psa. 103: 8; 2 Pet. 3: 15; Rom. 9: 22.) Eventually their persistence in wrong doing brought upon them as a nation the finality of punishment in their complete removal from the land of promise. It was in connection with these experiences of the Children of Israel that the Prophet said (Amos 3: 1-8; Isa. 45: 7), "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." God did not so deal with the cities of other nations, for in the same connection it is stated, "*You only* have I known of all the families of the earth: *therefore* I will *punish you* for all your iniquities"—that is, the Israelites were the only nation he "knew" in the sense of entering into a covenant with them. The Lord did not "create evil" in the sense of sin; nor did He hold Himself responsible for their iniquities; on the contrary, He held Himself in readiness to punish them when their sins multiplied and their necks were hardened against Him. (Jer. 16: 10-15.) The evil He produced was in the form of disciplinary punishment. He sought through the law and the prophets and these frequent disciplines to teach them the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the benefits of righteousness, and thus to develop a nation superior to those about them,

and ready in due time for a higher purpose under Messiah's leadership.

### **Wars as Calamities**

Nations were sometimes used by God to inflict punishment upon other nations. In this way more suffering and death resulted than from the calamities of nature. The journeyings of the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land were made the occasion of reckoning with several nations. (Gen. 15: 16; Deut. 20: 16, 17.) The Philistines, the Syrians, the Assyrians, and others, were used at different times to chastise the children of Israel. (Judges 10: 7; 2 Kings 13: 3; 17: 6, 23; 24: 1-4; Jer. 43: 10.) Those nations which took pleasure in warring against and oppressing Israel (though they apparently did not know they were being used for a purpose) were in turn overthrown, lest they should in their pride imagine themselves more worthy of perpetuation than Israel had been. (Isa. 13: 1, 17, 19; Jer. 51: 11; Obadiah 11-15; Jer. 25: 12; 46: 1, 2, 13; 47: 1; 48: 1; 49: 1, 7, 23, 28, 34; 50: 1, 18.) These and others, even all the nations of the earth, are mentioned as requiring punishment. (Jer. 25: 15-33.) In at least one instance the threatened overthrow of a Gentile nation was averted by the prompt introduction of reform measures by the King, with the hearty co-operation of the people. (Jonah 3: 5-10.) To what extent wars other than those mentioned in Scripture have been used by the Lord to inflict retribution upon wicked nations is conjectural. (Jer. 18: 2-10.) It is certain, however, that he foresaw, if he did not design, the succession of universal empires described by the prophet



Daniel (Chap. 2), and that the increase of knowledge concerning liberty and the rights of man which he brought about at the "time of the end" (Dan. 12: 4) has resulted in many changes in the standings of the nations. And, while saddened by the suffering these conflicts impose on countless innocent people, the lover of righteousness can yet trace with gladness every instance where right has triumphed over might, where sentiments of peace and goodwill have displaced hatred, and where arbitration has been substituted for physical violence. It is also positively declared that He will accomplish the complete overthrow of all "these kingdoms" by the power of the Kingdom of His dear Son. (Dan. 2: 44, 45.) Viewed from the standpoint of human pride, ambition and love of power, this will be the greatest of all political calamities. But it will be vain to protest; He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; and when all the tumult is over the people will be glad. They will say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths."—Psa. 2: 6; Isa. 2: 3.

The flood\* which removed the antediluvians and the fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah are described by the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 2: 5-9) as examples

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\*Some scientists regard the flood as the breaking of an envelope of vapour encircling the earth, which previous to that time was watered by mist, and not by rain, as now. If this be correct, it would appear that its breaking was timed to the hour when it was expedient to destroy an unauthorised race, and to begin afresh the peopling of the earth with pure Adamic stock. See publications by *Isaac N. Vail*.

of God's power to "deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto a day of judgment to be punished." He reasons from the certainty and severity of these punishments that God is able to punish the apparently prosperous teachers of "pernicious ways" which should intrude themselves into the Church of the Gospel age, and to deliver His people from their influence. But he does not say that every calamity occurring in any part of the earth is a direct visitation of divine wrath; nor does he explain the exact nature of the punishment to be meted out to these evil teachers, except that they shall lose whatever light they may have had, and that their last state shall be worse than their first. (Vss. 17-20.) Should they be of those upon whom the penalty of the Second Death is to be inflicted, that fate might be theirs dying peacefully in their beds. The violent end overtaking some sinners does not prove them to be worse than others who escape such calamity, as our Lord explained—"Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13: 1-5.) In the days of Sodom and Gomorrah there were other cities probably just as wicked which were not visited; hence, it is likely that the special visitation was to give an example and warning to others rather than to indicate finality in God's dealing with them; for, as we have seen, the Scriptures show that Israel, when subsequently in a worse condition, was not destroyed by literal fire; and that all these nations, returned to their "former estate," are to be dealt with in the Kingdom

age with a view to their reclamation and establishment in righteousness.—Ezek. 16: 55-63; Jer. 12: 14-17.

### **Physical Evil**

Under this head may be embraced disease in all its forms, culminating in death, the final catastrophe; for, as has been demonstrated in the preceding pages, death is not a blessing, but a curse—not an entrance into more wonderful life, but the cessation of existence. The imperfections of mind and body, under which the whole creation groans, have been handed down from parents to children from the beginning, and are a natural consequence of the sin introduced by our first parents and the penalty attached thereto. From the cradle to the grave man's life is one long battle with disease and death; even those who are so fortunate as to be born without serious constitutional weakness, and who could pass through life in comfort, are in constant danger of accident or pestilence. Man's inhumanity to man also inflicts untold suffering, not only in war, but in times of peace and comparative security.

### **Moral Evil**

Moral Evil or Sin is so closely allied with Physical or Constitutional Evil that it is impossible to consider one without the other. Not only is the Wages of Sin Death, in that Death\* claims the sinner, but also in

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\*The Second Death, as the "wages of sin," operates only when evil doing is wilfully persisted in after enlightenment and despite warnings and disciplines, and is not to be confounded with the Adamic death which came upon all by one man's disobedience.—Rom. 5: 12, 18; 1 Cor. 15: 21; Heb. 6: 4-8; 10: 26-31; 1 John 5: 16; Rev. 20: 7, 15.

that disease and suffering, which are the consequence, and even the accompaniment, of sin are part and parcel of Death. In the beginning it was said that disobedience to the divine command would incur the penalty of death, and in order that the penalty might be executed the transgressors were driven from the garden. This was by direct divine command and interposition. Since then, however, it has not been necessary separately to convict and to condemn each sinner of the race, for God had so arranged that just as Sin would perpetuate itself by the natural laws of heredity, the children inheriting the imperfections of their parents, and their predisposition to sin, so would Death be inherited by successive generations. Death is God's prescribed penalty for Sin, but it is left to the laws of nature to carry out His decree. By this it will appear that God is not the author of Sin, and that He did not Himself introduce it to mankind, but that He did so constitute man and the laws of nature that sin automatically results in injury to the person practising it. This is more apparent in some kinds of wrongdoing, which bring their votaries to an early, miserable death, than in others, which cause only a slight temporary indisposition; but the same principle is involved. While Death is inevitable in the case of every child of Adam, it is possible, by indulging sin, to hasten its work, or, on the other hand, by practising righteousness, to retard it. It is generally admitted that disease may be prevented, and healthy minds and bodies developed, by the practice of righteousness, and by the observance of sanitation and of the laws of health. Modern medical science has done much to show the relation between

filth and disease and pestilence, thus making manifest the close connection between sin and disease; for the indolence and indifference which tolerate filth are but phases of imperfection and sin.

### **God's Attitude Toward Sin**

That God is not the author of sin is shown by His attitude toward it, as well as by the historical account of its introduction. (Gen. 1: 31; 3: 1-7, 14-19; 6: 5-8; 18: 20; etc., etc.) Throughout the world's history God's displeasure toward Sin has been manifested, though all men have not been sufficiently enlightened to perceive it. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of other wicked nations, evidenced His attitude (2 Pet. 2: 6), and the children of Israel were specially set apart to be instructed in the benefits of righteousness and the baneful effects of sin, that they might understand God's abhorrence of sin. "God is angry with the wicked every day." (Deut. 9: 8; 2 Kings 17: 16-18; Psa. 7: 11; 50: 16-23.) The Law given to the Jews set up a standard of righteousness to which they were instructed to attain; and their inability to do so made plain their imperfection, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. (Rom. 7: 13.) The stiff-necked and hard-hearted were not able to appreciate the situation, but the Lord pointed it out to them (John 8: 33-36; 15: 22; 9: 39-41), and the Apostle Paul by his letter to the Romans makes it clear for the sincere inquirer since his day. Those who accuse God of being the Author and Instigator of Sin, accuse Him of inconsistency and untruth, since He nowhere

expresses sympathy with it, but places the responsibility for it on others. (John 8: 42-44; 2 Cor. 4: 4; Eph. 2: 2.) On the contrary, we are directly informed that "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. . . . Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, in Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1: 13-17.) No fountain sends forth both bitter water and sweet. (Jas. 3: 11; Matt. 7: 15-20.) To send good things to men (Matt. 5: 45), and to work blessing out of the evil conditions into which man fell (Ezek. 16: 60-63; Jer. 12: 14-17; Eph. 1: 9, 10; Isa. 25: 6-9; Rev. 22: 17) is God's good pleasure; and all who know His glorious plan delight themselves in meditations on His loving generosity, on the magnitude of His operations, and on the success ultimately to be attained, as forecasted in His Holy Word.—Rev. 4: 11; 5: 13; 21: 3, 4.

In inquiring, What good purpose has been served by the permission of evil in its varied forms for six thousand years? one is asking for an explanation of the divine plan of salvation. The following facts, which could not be demonstrated in any other way than by the permission of evil, and which will ultimately be demonstrated to all men, are suggested as justifying God's plan of involving the entire race in death—with its accompanying moral, physical and calamitous evils—on account of one man's sin. These facts constitute a complete vindication of the divine character.

1. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not

yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. 46: 9, 10; 55: 8-11.

2. Man's finiteness, and the uselessness of contending with his Maker; yet, when enlightened, his absolute freedom of choice, having been made in God's own image, and free to choose either righteousness and life, or sin and death.—Isa. 40: 12-17; Gen. 1: 26, 27; 4: 6, 7; Deut. 30: 15-20; 2 Cor. 5: 20, 21; Acts 3: 19-23; Isa. 55: 1, 2; Rev. 22: 14-17.

3. The reasonableness of God's requirements, conserving man's highest interests.—Gen. 1: 27-31; Lev. 25; Prov. 14: 34; Ezek. 18: 31, 32; Isa. 25: 6-8; Matt. 7: 24-27; 2 Pet. 1: 10; Rev. 21: 3-8.

4. His wisdom and power, in devising a plan covering ages of time, and involving millions of persons, angels and men, and in bringing it to a successful issue.—Eph. 1: 9, 10; 3: 9-11; Isa. 45: 18; Gen. 1: 31; 12: 1-3; 15: 5; Jude 6; Rev. 20: 4; 21: 3, 4.

5. His foresight in providing 4000 years before his advent, an Instrument useful in accomplishing His purposes.—Eph. 3: 11; John 8: 56; Rev. 13: 8.

6. His wise economy, whereby the condemnation of the entire race in one man permitted the redemption of that race by the sacrifice of only one man corresponding to the first-named.—Rom. 5: 12-19; 1 Cor. 15: 21.

7. His love, in giving as that corresponding price One near and dear to Him, rather than in arranging a plan which would have involved no sacrifice on His own part.—John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 9, 10; Matt. 17: 5.

8. His justice and incorruptibility, whereby absolute confidence in His Word and judgment is invited and

confirmed.—Psa. 89: 14; Num. 23: 19; Rom. 3: 19-26; Heb. 6: 13-18; James 1: 13-17; Psa. 5: 4.

9. His long suffering toward evil doers, in order to give time for repentance—"not willing that any should perish."—2 Pet. 3: 9, 15; Rom. 10: 21; Rom. 9: 22; Ezek. 16: 48-63; Isa. 25: 6-9; Rev. 22: 1, 17.

10. His capacity to sympathise with and comfort such members of the fallen race as turn to Him, notwithstanding that for their good they must for a time continue to suffer under stress of present imperfect conditions.—2 Cor. 1: 3-5; Rom. 15: 4; 2 Cor. 13: 11.

11. The impossibility of indulging in sin without bringing down deserved penalties.—Ezek. 18; Gen. 2: 17; Rom. 6: 23.

12. The benefits of righteousness—love, joy, peace, pleasant social intercourse with the righteous and blessed communion with God.—Gal. 5: 22, 23; 1 John 1: 3, 7; 1 Cor. 12: 13.

13. God's extraordinary magnanimity, shared by His dear Son, in extending to a few members of the human family the honours and emoluments of the divine nature, and the privilege of sharing in the rulership of the Kingdom.—Eph. 2: 1-8; Luke 12: 32; John 14: 3; Rev. 3: 21.

14. The establishment in righteousness of a race of perfect beings, capable of appreciating it most deeply on account of their experience with evil, and with ability to understand God's viewpoint, character and methods, to endorse His plan, and to serve Him without compulsion or fear for all eternity.—Gen. 1: 28; Psa. 8: 4-9; Matt. 25: 34; Dan. 2: 44; Rev. 21: 1-8.



### XIII.

## "If Ye Do These Things"

**H**OW fully satisfying to Mind and Heart is the glorious Purpose of God, the preceding pages have attempted to set forth. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime," said the Apostle, in his letter to the Romans (15: 4), "were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." This is as true of the New Testament as of the Old, concerning which these words were written; for the N.T. not only explains and enlarges upon the things foretold in the O.T., as may be seen by reference to the many quotations from the O.T. made by our Lord and the Apostles (*e.g.*, Luke 4: 18-21; Acts 2: 16-21; 3: 22-26; Rom. 10.), but it also brings to light, through the Gospel, precious truths concerning the High Calling and the Hope of Immortality and of everlasting life. (2 Tim. 1: 10; Eph. 3: 3-7; 1 Thes. 4: 15-17; 1 Cor. 15: 51-52.) These are indeed conducive to patience and comfort while the reproaches of Christ are being endured; and they stimulate to hope that by the grace of God we may finally be sharers of the glory to be revealed in the Kingdom.—Rom. 8: 16-18.

But how may we have assurance that these precious promises and hopes are legitimately ours, who are in ourselves not only unworthy of the glorious inheritance,

but also unequal to the conflict by which it is to be gained? If our minds are satisfied by the revelation of God's holy character, as manifest in the perfect co-operation of His wisdom, justice, love and power, for the deliverance of mankind from Sin and Death; if the affection of our hearts has been won by the sublime gift of love, in that our blessed Lord Jesus came into the world to "give his life a ransom for many;" and if we have gratefully entered into the New Covenant with God over the Sacrifice once offered on behalf of sinners (Psa. 50: 5; Heb. 9: 14, 15, 18-20; 10: 14-20), what more remains to be done, that we may know we are acceptable, and may have full assurance of the final reward?

Our Lord forewarned us against too great assurance on insufficient grounds; saying, "Not every one that saith unto Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom;" and we are told that some, zealous in doing "wonderful works" in His name, will not be approved. But if His warning is unmistakable, equally clear are His directions and encouragements. "*Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.*" (Matt. 7: 21-29; Luke 6: 46.) It is necessary first to hear His sayings; then upon whomsoever heareth is placed the obligation to obey them, if he would stand unmoved when the disciplines of life, or the larger dispensational changes and calamities, put his faith to the test. For those who desire no responsibility, who do not wish to hear His sayings, much less to do them, these pages are not written. But to those who do, in sincerity and truth, acknowledge Him as Lord; who are hungering and thirsting to hear His sayings, and who, hearing them, are genuinely desirous of doing them, we give a message of consolation and hope.

### **The Vine and the Branches**

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." As the branches of the vine partake of the life of the vine, and are nourished by the sap, so each consecrated believer is united to Christ, receiving life and sustenance from Him. The same Holy Spirit which was in Him is in them, and they are expected to bring forth the same desirable fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is described as "Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance (Gal. 5: 22), and our dear Redeemer's life and character reveal these traits in all their beauty and consistency. Of ourselves we could not successfully imitate His virtues; but in this we are not left to struggle alone; for our Lord said, "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The Heavenly Father Himself will assist each of His children (children by Christ Jesus—Gal. 3: 26; Eph. 1: 5) in this important work of fruit-bearing. Indeed, he who receives not chastening is not a son; for "Whom the Father loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. 12: 5-11.) If, when the chastening hand is upon us, we recognise it as the hand of the great Husbandman pruning away the excrescences and useless leaves and tendrils, let us acquiesce heartily in the process; and, like the pruned branch, the more energy and vitality from the Vine, the more of the Holy Spirit, will flow into and through us, to bring forth "more fruit." To the careful Husbandman, and to the flourishing Vine, belong the credit for the resulting effects in the dependent branches, as demonstrated by the quick withering of any branch cut off from the Vine.

The Parable of the Vine shows the branches merely responsive to the operations of the Husbandman and to

the nourishment of the Vine. In 2 Pet. 1: 2-11, is shown the part that must be performed by each individual believer in the development of the fruit of the Spirit. He must not only be quiescent in allowing the Holy Spirit to operate in him, but as an efficient artisan he must also be active in building up a structure of character, according to well-defined plans and specifications. Having by the grace of God been forgiven his iniquities through faith in the finished work of Christ, and having been endowed with a regenerated will, and being considered a "new creature," to whom all things have become new (2 Cor. 5: 14-17), it is incumbent on him, as an intelligent, active being, to undertake energetically the task of eradicating the habits and tendencies of the old nature (2 Cor. 7: 1; 1 Cor. 11: 31; Col. 3: 5-10), and of bringing every thought and act into captivity to the obedience of Christ.—Col. 3: 10; Eph. 4: 17-24; 2 Cor. 10: 5.

The Exhortation is addressed to those who "have obtained like precious faith with us in the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1: 1, R.V.), and the Greeting is that grace and peace may be multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. No doubt every Christian reader of these lines can testify to the fulfilment of this prayer in his own experience. The more he has come to know of God and of Jesus Christ, their character, and the wonderful plan of salvation, the deeper is the peace and joy in the realisation that every detail of the gracious plan will be worked out in due time, and that in the meantime all things work together for good to those who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8: 28.) This is indeed a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, and which keeps the hearts of His "little ones" in all times of stress and trial.—John 14: 27; 16: 33; Phil. 4: 6, 7.

"All things that pertain to life and godliness" are given us "through the knowledge of Him that hath

called us to glory and virtue." (Vs. 3.) "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom thou hast sent." (Jno. 17: 3.) Knowledge of the first principles is necessary before the first steps can be taken in the Christian life, but that is not all the knowledge required to run successfully the race for the prize of the High Calling. "His own glory and virtue," held out before us for admiration and imitation, and the "exceeding great and precious promises," glowingly set forth in His Word, operate in us as incentives to persevering effort. Having by His grace in Christ "escaped from the corruption that is in the world through desire" (vs. 4), there still remains the important work of thorough transformation into the divine likeness. "Be not fashioned according to this age, but be ye *transformed* by the *renewing of your mind*," that ye may prove [by practice] what is the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Am. R.V. margin, Rom. 12: 2.) "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God Who worketh in you [when the Apostles' instructions are obeyed, even through difficulty], both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Phil. 2: 12, 13, Am. R.V.) "Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, be sober, and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as *children of obedience*, not fashioning yourselves according to your former desires in the time of your ignorance; but like as He who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1: 13-16.) These and other similar passages of the Scriptures exhibit the broad outlines of the character-structure to be built up.

But we are not left to fill in the details according to our own inclination or fancy: our minds are incom-

petent even for that task. Many specific exhortations and commands are given for the guidance of the weakest "babe in Christ," lest he, through ignorance or carelessness, fall into one or another of the numerous snares set for the feet of the unwary.—Matt. 5: 3-9; 16: 24; Rom. 6: 11; 12: 9-21; 2: 28-32; 3: 11-18; 13: 13-14; 1 Cor. 6: 5-10; 10: 20, 21; Gal. 5: 19-21; Eph. 5: 3-7; James 3: 1-16; 4: 1-17.

The Apostle proceeds with the enumeration of the requirements to successful entrance into the Kingdom. "And beside this"—that is, having obtained "like precious faith," having experienced grace and peace through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; having realised ourselves called to glory and virtue; having feasted on the precious promises; and having acknowledged that all these have been instrumental in assisting escape from the corruption that is in the world—after all this, giving all diligence,

### **"Superadd to Your Faith**

Fortitude; and to Fortitude Knowledge; and to Knowledge Self Control; and to Self Control Patience; and to Patience Godliness; and to Godliness Brotherly Kindness; and to Brotherly Kindness Love." In other words, Do not be satisfied with first attainments in any of the graces of the Spirit, but add and superadd of each and all, daily and hourly. No single grace may be cultivated to the exclusion of the others; none may be neglected without detriment.

Faith is the foundation; but it, like the other graces, is capable of expansion, of being superadded to itself. It is developed by the trials and testings of the Christian life, and by the repeated experiences of God's love and care in time of need. When the disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith," he gave them a parable, to the effect that if when they were weary and discouraged they continued to serve Him, not wishing to rest until He had been served, their faith would increase by reason of the waiting, watching and serving under diffi-

culties. (Luke 12: 35-38.) So while all the graces named are added to faith, their practice in turn tends to the development of more faith—more faith in a faithful God, in the love of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the precious promises, in the eternal glory.

### **To Faith Superadd Fortitude**

Immediately succeeding, if not accompanying, the earliest experiences of Faith, come tests of Fidelity. It may be a jeering word, or a harsh criticism, or a temptation to indulge some weakness, or even the sense of loneliness which often comes after the first joy in the realisation of sins forgiven. But if Fortitude be ready to prop the weakening Faith, Faith immediately brightens, Fortitude is added as a living experience, the test is borne successfully, and Faith and Fortitude rejoice together in the victory.

### **And to Fortitude Knowledge**

Knowledge of first principles has already been described as a pre-requisite to Faith. The knowledge to be added to Faith and Fortitude is not only increased intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures and of God's purposes generally, but that experimental knowledge which results from the practice of righteousness and from intimate acquaintance with God and His methods of dealing with His children. "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are hid in Christ, and it is only those who possess the Spirit of God, and who seek perfect conformity to His holy will, who may search out the "deep things." (Col. 2: 2, 3, 9, 10; 1 Cor. 2: 10, 12.) To study the character of Christ brings increased knowledge of God, because Jesus was a perfect manifestation of God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3: 15, 16); and to practice His virtues means to comprehend the motive of purity and love underlying His acts, and to develop the same unselfish disposition. It becomes a habit to trust God, and to be loyal to Him, because increased knowledge demonstrates this as the only reasonable conduct

in one so graciously enlightened by the divine goodness; to doubt and to waver grow daily more unreasonable.

### **And to Knowledge Self Control**

Self Control is necessary from the very beginning of Christian experience; indeed, a large part of Christian experience consists in learning its value, from the first efforts to put away sin and disagreeable habits, to the last triumph of the new mind over the old on the day of death. To "let one's self go," to indulge the passing fancy, whether others are thereby injured or inconvenienced or not, is the way of the "natural man." To consider first, and to do to others as he would be done by; to "seek first the kingdom," and to make all other desires subservient, is the way of the "spiritual man." The liberty which is in Christ (Gal. 5: 1, 13; James 1: 25) is not license to selfishness, but deliverance from the power of Sin and Death (and in the case of the converted Israelite freedom from the bondage of the law—Rom. 7: 4-6), and the privilege of exercising all one's powers to the glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. (2 Cor. 5: 14, 15; 1 Cor. 6: 20; Matt. 6: 33; Col. 3: 23; 1 Cor. 10: 31; Rom. 14: 17-19.) No man who strives for the mastery in sport is successful unless he is trained, and strives according to the rules of the game. No man can be a soldier unless he is willing to undergo severe discipline. Neither can anyone endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ unless he have his mind and body in full control, and in complete subjection to the commands of the Captain of His salvation. Such an one needs not to wait for the glories of the Kingdom for his reward. He already experiences it here in the unspeakable joys of a holy life; for the husbandman who labours is first to partake of the fruits of his own toil.—2 Tim. 2: 3-6.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption;



but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. 6: 7, 8; Rom. 8: 5-14; 6: 11-14, 16-23.

Self Control assists Faith in time of trial, holding back the onslaughts of doubt and fear, brings forward the reserves to strengthen Fortitude, recalls to Knowledge the well nigh stampeded promises and recollections of former victories, and rallies every other grace to perform its part fearlessly and nobly.

### **And to Self Control Patience**

Patience, or Patient Endurance, is found to be the outcome of the continued exercise of Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, and Self Control. The "babe in Christ" (if at the same time young in years, and lacking experience of life), is usually restive under restraint, and more or less self-opinionated. He is free in his criticisms of others, zealous to be up and doing in the Lord's vineyard according to his own notions, and anxious to demonstrate that if certain power and authority were in his hands all things could be worked according to the counsel of his own will, to the astonishment and praise of his elders. That certain moral laws are as regular and sure in their action as the movement of the earth around the sun, and that to attempt to interfere with them is likely to be as disastrous in the one case as in the other, is a lesson dearly bought in the school of experience.

That the Psalmist had learned this by his experience is shown in his advice to the godly. "Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart on your bed, and be still." (Psa. 4: 4; Eph. 4: 26.) Well may we stand with bared heads before the marvellous workings of retributive justice, unmoved by the apparent temporary triumph of evil and evil doers. If we sin not ourselves, while enduring injustice and affliction, but wait patiently on the Lord, we shall experience the blessing and approval of God.—1 Pet. 2: 21-23; Psa. 91.

Indifference and torpidity are often mistaken for Patience, because the outward appearance of placidity is akin. But true Patience is exercised only when the sufferer is keenly alive to the wrong or trial inflicted upon him, and yet endures it without malice, or desire for revenge, and without seeking his own vindication at the expense of others.

The patience shown by non-Christians differs from that here described, since it is not a product, as in the Christian, of faith, but is usually the expression of a natural optimism or a phlegmatic temperament. The Patience now under consideration is that which is developed in the school of Christ. Says the Apostle (Rom. 5: 3-5), after describing the two states of justification and hope of the glory of God experienced by the Christian, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that *tribulation worketh patience*; and patience experience, and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." The Patience that counts is therefore that which is manifested by reason of the shedding abroad in the heart of the love of God, and because the tribulations are recognised as part of God's method for the perfecting of the saints for glory.

A mistake is often made in expecting to possess or develop this wonderful grace without tribulation. Christians are heard lamenting their crosses and trials, as though they expected the Lord to make the way of salvation easy for them. But, often, the more they lament, the heavier the cross; partly, no doubt, because their state of mind tends to magnify the difficulties, whereas a spirit of submission to the will of God, and making the best of things, would soon relieve the irritation, and bring instead sweet peace in the Lord. The Kingdom of Heaven is not set before us as easy of attainment. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "Verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer

tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (2 Tim. 3: 12; 1 Thes. 3: 4.) The attitude of Faith and Patience is—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4: 17.

Patient Endurance serves to manifest the genuineness of Faith; it makes Fortitude dignified and sincere, rather than sensational and boastful; it utilises Knowledge to philosophize on the weakness of human nature, and on the long-suffering of God, which it seeks to imitate; it stimulates Self Control, that a tight rein may be kept on the tongue or other members which might under pressure be led into sin (James 3: 3-10, 13-18), and it gives opportunity for the flourishing of every other grace, since all are called into requisition to achieve the one great end—to glorify God through and in every experience, even unto death.

#### **And to Patience Godliness**

Godliness, or Piety, means reverence toward God, and living for God. It means devotion to holiness, and separation from the world and its spirit, from self, and from vanity and ambition. It was by reason of His Piety that our blessed Lord Jesus was heard, when with strong crying and tears He offered Himself to God on our behalf, and was acceptable. (Heb. 5: 7-10.) Great is the mystery of godliness or piety, because its principles are unknown to the world at large. Its standard is that of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose presence and mission were ignored by the outward professors of holiness, and whose work is yet but imperfectly understood by many of his followers. The true Church is the bulwark of this Piety, because it is the repository of the Word of God, and is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being chief Corner Stone. (1 Tim. 3: 15, 16; Eph. 2: 19-22.) Jesus, whose piety and faithfulness were openly attested by the voice from Heaven, is indeed qualified to impart the same to all who obey Him.

Piety is an outgrowth of faith and obedience, and indicates a character well established in righteousness. Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, Self Control, and Patience, and every other grace, are essential to true Piety, and Piety makes the manifestation of each an act of worship and praise.

### **"And to Godliness Brotherly Kindness"**

These words remind us of—"Be ye merciful, as your Father in Heaven is merciful. He is kind unto the unthankful, and unto the evil." (Luke 6: 33-36.) Godlikeness therefore does not limit its kindness to the brethren, but its kindness is of a brotherly sort. It is not the kindness of a stranger, nor the kindness of ostentation and show, nor the kindness of patronage, nor the kindness which gives, hoping to receive again, but it is free, generous, and hearty, with that goodwill which is so pleasant to see in a brother showering gifts upon the younger members of the family. It is love and unselfishness in action, in imitation of God, and in pursuance of the example set by our great Elder Brother, who freely gave Himself and all He had to redeem a fallen race. It is the outward manifestation of "unfeigned love of the brethren" (1 Pet. 1: 22), and it requires the unceasing co-operation of Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, Self Control, Patience and Godliness, as well as of Love, to secure its unfailing operation. And, like these graces, it is reciprocatory. It enlarges the heart, and causes Faith to expand in recognition of others of like precious faith; it permits Fortitude, while incorruptible, to be kind and benevolent; it makes Knowledge less bookish and more spiritual, less self-centred, and more communicative; it rouses Self-Control from the single role of self-suppression to the equally important work of developing and using latent talent and ability, time and means, in the interest of others; it enables Patience to be kind to those whose wrong doing is being endured; it recommends Godliness as more than a mere profession; it is the legitimate outworking of Love in the heart.

### **And to Brotherly Kindness Love**

Love is defined as—"A strong complex emotion or feeling, causing one to appreciate, delight in, and crave the presence or possession of the object, and to please or promote the welfare of that object; devoted affection or attachment."

The Love of God was manifested in the giving of His dear Son to be the Redeemer of mankind, more than in His creative or other work, because it indicated (1) deep personal interest in the welfare of the race, (2) self-sacrifice in giving one dearly beloved by Himself to die on their behalf, (3) desire that men might live to enjoy His favour, and He the evidences of their happiness. The love of Jesus manifested the same sentiments; for He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." And the command is given to the brethren—"Love one another, as I have loved you."—John 15: 12, 13; 14: 3; 1 John 3: 14, 16, 23, 24; 4: 7-13.

Love means respect, admiration and desire to serve; and where respect and admiration are undeserved, it still means desire to serve and benefit. Love is genuine affection for others, and interest in their welfare, and enables the possessor to utilise to advantage all other qualities and virtues. So the Apostle explains—"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."—1 Cor. 13, R.V.

### **Adding and Superadding**

It should not be supposed that any of these graces must await development until the others have been

perfected. The result of such a method would be to produce among the Lord's people an assortment of monstrosities. Knowledge without Love would become sounding brass and tinkling cymbal; Self Control without Faith and Brotherly Kindness would become designing tyranny; Fortitude without Knowledge would become fanaticism; Love without Self Control becomes weakness, in spiritual things as well as in temporal affairs. Of all growths, character development is the most complicated and wonderful. It is like the weaving of a beautiful tapestry—each colour and shade has its appropriate place in relation to each, and to the whole design, and is repeated again and again to produce the symmetrical colour scheme. Knowledge is not the whole, Brotherly Kindness is not the exclusive requirement, Love is not all comprehensive; but each, like a part of a complicated machine, is ready to respond to the touch of the lever, and to perform its allotted work in every affair and circumstance required to be dealt with by the Individual.

And which of all the graces of the spirit is more quickly and often requisitioned in the development of a Christlike character than this beautiful one—Love? When the blessings of Faith are first realised, how quickly Love responds in gratitude to Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light; and in affection toward those “who have obtained like precious Faith with us?” When Fortitude is put to the proof, how spontaneously Love fills the heart, with pity and consideration for the opponents, and with added devotion to Him Who likewise endured “great contradiction of sinners against Himself”! When Knowledge increases, how ready is Love to suggest, Use it not selfishly, for self-aggrandisement, but to edification; shine as a true light in the world, speak as the oracles of God! When Self Control is called upon to repress outbursts of the old nature, what comfort is brought by Love pervading the heart, and stimulating the exercise instead all good thoughts and

acts! When Patience is found to mean not patient endurance for one hour, or one day, or one year, but for a lifetime, what can revive the weary spirit like the realisation of the Love of God, and constrain to the manifestation of like tenderness and long suffering toward the erring? As Godliness or Piety is sought to be attained, what makes it genuine holiness, but the sincerity of the Love toward God and fellowmen which prompts the sacrifice of Self in His service? When the opportunity comes to show Brotherly Kindness, what makes it sweet to the recipient but the knowledge of the true, sympathetic Love behind it?

### **The New Covenant**

This showing forth of the divine virtues by those to whom God has been merciful in the forgiveness of their iniquities, and in forgetting their sins, is a result of Gospel Age operation of the New Covenant. These are the "Israelites indeed" (Rom. 2: 28, 29; 11: 17), God is their God, and they are His people; they need not tell each other to "know the Lord," for they all know Him, from the least to the greatest; and He is fulfilling to them His promise, to write His law on their minds and hearts, by the power of the Holy Spirit, transforming them into the same image from glory to glory.—1 Pet. 2: 9, 10; Heb. 8: 7-13; Eph. 3: 6; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 17, 18.

### **If Ye Do These Things**

Knowledge of the Lord Jesus is increased by the doing of these things, because He did them, and suffered in the doing of them. We thus have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, and understand the purity and beauty of His life in a way those who do not practise His virtues are unable to do. We are made, even now, "partakers of the divine nature" or disposition, and for that reason may anticipate with confidence His approval at the end of our course. (2 Pet. 1: 4; 1 John 3: 18-21; 4: 13-17.) To fail to do

these things, is to forget that the old sins were once forgiven (2 Pet. 1: 9; 2: 20-22), and to relapse into indulgence of the same. As the Scripture plainly declares, it is a serious matter to fall away from the faith, and once having known the way of righteousness to depart from it.

“Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure; for, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—2 Pet. 1: 10, 11.

“He therefore Beloved,  
Seeing He know These Things before,  
Beware lest He also,  
Being led away with the Error of the Wicked,  
Fall from your own Stedfastness.  
But Grow in Grace.  
And in the Knowledge of  
Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
To Him be Glory  
Both Now and Forever.”

Amen.



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